

THE THREE FACES OF EVE



A condensation of the book by

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ONLY one slight figure sat in the doctors' consulting-room, only one tongue spoke, only one pair of blue eyes flashed or wept. But the two eminent psychiatrists who treated Eve White soon realized that in this timid, modest housewife they were dealing with *three* distinct personalities, each struggling to control her life.

This amazing true story of a multiple personality has the excitement of a suspense novel, the fascinating intimacy of a case history. If the patient's sanity was to be preserved, two of the three conflicting personalities must be destroyed. *But which two?* The outcome is totally unexpected and deeply moving.

"We are left with a clear impression of a fascinating and mysterious true story."

—*Time and Tide*

"Absorbingly interesting."

—*The Observer*

CHAPTER 1

S HE DID not at first appear to be an unusual or a particularly interesting patient. This neat, colourless young woman was, she said quietly, twenty-five years of age. In a level, slightly monotonous voice she described the severe headaches from which she had suffered now for several months. Unlike some patients to whom the elastic term *neurotic* is applied, she did not say that the pain was "unbearable," or "as if an axe were splitting my skull." She described the attacks without dramatic emphasis.

We shall call the patient Mrs. Eve White, though that was not her real name. There was no suggestion of anything that the layman might think of as *nervousness*, as she sat in our consulting-room, her feet close together, speaking clearly but in soft, low tones. Her hands lay still on the arms of the chair; her head and shoulders drooped just a little. Her dark hair and pale-blue eyes were distinctly pretty, though she seemed too retiring and inert to be very clearly aware of her potential attractiveness.

Her local physician had sent her from her home in a neighbouring town for psychiatric consultation. Ordinary physical examinations, X-ray and laboratory studies had disclosed no cause of the headaches.

Without evasion or fanaticism, but with real perplexity, she discussed her situation. Six years ago she had married a young man who was a faithful Catholic. As a serious Baptist, she had had misgivings about the commitment she had made before marriage, promising that her children would be brought up as Catholics. Now that her daughter, Bonnie, was three years old, she could not bring herself to turn the child over to an

institution that seemed ever more alien to her. She had stubbornly refused to have Bonnie baptized in the Catholic Church. As time passed she apparently had tended to identify all her husband's faults and all sources of contention between them with his church.

Mrs. White did not, however, hold her husband alone responsible for the difficulties of their marriage. In fact, she took pains to defend him, and only reluctantly gave some details of the quarrelling that had become habitual. Her husband, she said, had often seemed irritable or sarcastic towards her during the last few months. Sometimes she could not tell what had offended him. She finally admitted that on one occasion, quite unlike himself, he had struck her. Though it was apparently only a light slap, administered perhaps inadvertently in pulling his arm away from her detaining hand, she had felt deeply hurt. He had gone out then, and later that same night, while alone with little Bonnie, the patient had suffered a distressing miscarriage. Since then, she said, the marital relations which had been difficult for a long time had grown steadily worse. She had felt a coldness towards her husband, a deep alteration of her feelings which she could not influence. It was shortly after this experience that the headaches had begun.

It was almost impossible to imagine this gentle, unvengeful little woman participating aggressively in a personal argument. Something about her suggested the admirable qualities implied in the Christian principle of turning the other cheek. Surely it must be an unusual man who would lose his temper with her. What were the grounds for his anger?

"I am not quite sure what it is I do that aggravates him so." She hesitated, then sadly admitted, "I've never seemed to make him happy."

He had apparently lost most of the sexual interest he had once felt for her. Never, she confessed with regret, had she been able to reach any sort of exciting fulfilment in their marriage relations. Lately she had found physical contact with her husband distasteful.

The joy this couple must have felt in each other when they planned to marry had, so far as one could tell, disappeared entirely. Little closeness or sharing of interests had grown between them during their marriage. It was plain that Mrs. White saw no hope of happiness with her husband. It was equally plain that she did not want a divorce. Her failure to have her little girl baptized a Catholic seemed to augment her

determination not to break another vow. Fear of what divorce might do to her child also convinced her that she must continue the marriage. Behind Mrs. White's restrained expression and her almost stiltedly decorous posture, indications of deeply felt grief and bewilderment and an almost desperate love for little Bonnie became ever more apparent.

Mrs. White spoke of black-outs which followed her severe headaches. At times she referred to these spells as though she simply fainted; at other times the examining doctor felt she might be describing more complicated periods of amnesia, or loss of memory. Neurologic examination revealed no indication of organic disease that might cause periods of unconsciousness. There was no history of convulsive disorder, such as epilepsy.

So this is how the patient, Eve White, appeared in her first psychiatric interview. Her personal problems were complicated and serious, but her clinical symptoms were not unusual. Nothing about her led the doctor to suspect that from this colourless little person would emerge manifestations so challenging that eventually her case would be presented at a meeting of the American Psychiatric Association as something almost unique.

OVER a period of several weeks, Mrs. White returned for a few more interviews, sometimes accompanied by her husband. Then, and throughout our treatment of her, most of Eve White's interviews were with Dr. Thigpen, but often in consultation with Dr. Cleckley. Henceforth the terms "doctor" and "therapist" can be taken to refer to either of us—Thigpen or Cleckley.

During this early period Eve White made gratifying improvement. She still had occasional headaches but they were less severe. She no longer reported black-out spells. The doctor had tried to help the Whites resolve their difficulties, and relations between them were apparently much better, though there seemed little hope that the marriage would ever be really happy. Her husband, Ralph White, confirmed in general the history as given by the patient. He admitted that at times she showed peculiar changes of mood, but he regarded her, nevertheless, as a patient, industrious wife and a devoted mother.

"It's hard to believe, Doctor, that such a sweet, steady woman could ever aggravate anybody. Maybe that is why I lose my temper once in a

while. You get accustomed to what she's like and you don't know what to make of . . . of anything different. It must be a sort of little erratic streak that comes out just every now and then." He spoke also of occasional forgetfulness that had caused misunderstandings between them.

In retrospect it seems remarkable how little emphasis Ralph White put on these points, how little detail he gave.

Several weeks passed without news from Mrs. White. Then a discouraging letter from the husband was received. The severe headaches had returned. Seated in the consulting-room again a few days later, Eve White seemed very tense and dejected and in considerable pain. She was concerned with a dream which had recurred several times.

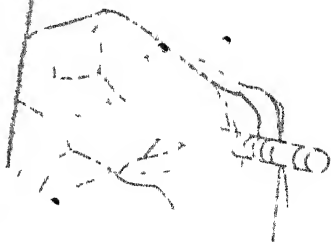
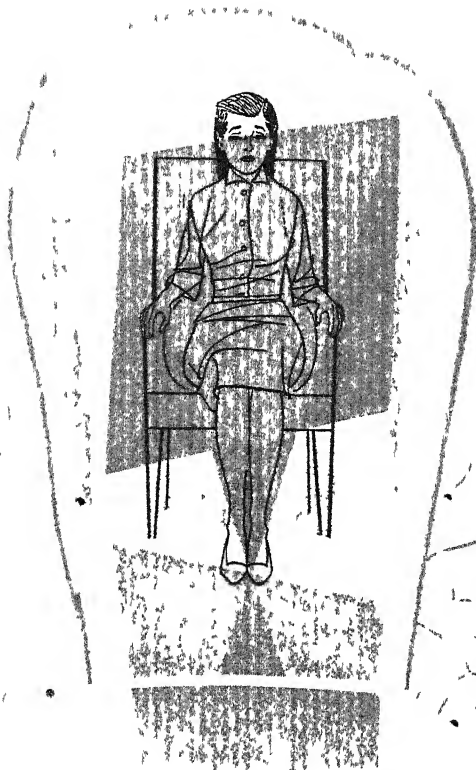
"I am in a tremendous room," she said. "Towards the centre of this room is a pool of stagnant green water. On the edge of the pool stand my husband and my uncle. I am in the water with Bonnie. We both seem to be drowning, but I must not take her out where she will be near the others. Despite all I can do, I put her directly into my husband's hands. Then my uncle, whom I love dearly, tries to push my head under the slimy water."

As she seemed unable to relate this dream to the events of her life, the doctor suggested that she undergo hypnosis. She agreed, and in this state was asked to repeat the dream and told that on awakening she was to endeavour to determine what it might reflect of her actual situation.

Awake, she stated without hesitation that the room seemed to represent her existence, the stagnant pool her husband's church. In the dream, as in reality, she was trying to escape its influence, especially for her child. Her husband stood aside, refusing to help her in this struggle. The uncle who stood with him, unlike her parents and other relatives, had encouraged her to fulfil her promise and have her daughter brought up as a Catholic.

This interpretation revealed nothing she did not already consciously know. Discussing it, however, seemed to help her bring out some previously restrained emotion connected with these problems. The headache, to her surprise, suddenly ceased. She left the consulting-room more nearly relaxed and cheerful than the doctor had yet seen her.

For almost a year after this the patient got along fairly well. Little was heard from her until her husband telephoned to say it was urgent that she return for help. A quarrel had caused deep disturbances in the



marriage. While visiting her cousin Flo, who lived fifty miles away in Columbia, Eve had apparently enjoyed herself so much that she had stayed longer than planned, failing, however, to inform her husband that she would do so. When she did not return on the expected date, he telephoned her. In curt tones she told him she would come home when she was good and ready. Disturbed, he at once drove to Flo's house, where Eve received him antagonistically, shouting that she was not going home. After a truly violent scene both husband and wife had announced the end of their relationship. Ralph White had then gone home and waited for his wife to return for her personal possessions.

When she came he was astonished at her smile, at her gentle voice. She kissed him lightly on the cheek, then casually began her routine household tasks as if unaware of any problem. Though puzzled, he was relieved by her apparent reversal of feelings, and decided not to risk precipitating another crisis by referring to their quarrel. For several days relations between them seemed at their best. Then one evening he found Eve packing her suit-case. She was calm and matter-of-fact. Cautiously he asked why she was doing so.

"Why, I'm getting ready to go and visit Flo," she told him. She seemed at a loss, wondering why he should ask her this. Before the recent trip, they had often discussed Eve's spending several days with her cousin Flo. Now Eve could not understand what she took to be her husband's unfamiliarity with the well-known project. Nor could Ralph convince her that she had already paid the visit.

When she came to the consulting-room she told the doctor that she had not the slightest recollection of the period Ralph said she had spent with Flo and her husband, Jack. This, the doctor decided, was an impressive amnesia. Hypnosis was easily induced and then Eve found it possible to recall the visit to her cousin in considerable detail.

What she and the congenial cousin had done—shopping expeditions, going to the cinema, playing canasta—became quite clear, and was retained after she was awakened from hypnosis. Her host and hostess reported later that Eve had been in wonderful spirits during the visit, showing at times a gaiety and liveliness they had not seen in her for years. She had so many plans and engagements that she was seldom in the house.

About the quarrel with her husband, though she said that she

remembered it, Eve's remarks seemed to the doctor not quite satisfactory. Flo and her husband later confirmed Ralph's account of his wife's participating in the fray with all the fury of a tigress. Though Eve denied nothing of this, something suggested that her memory acknowledged the experience as lacking in some dimension of reality. Sensing that Eve became more and more tense as the quarrel was discussed, the doctor refrained from pursuing the subject.

Later she expressed alarm at having suffered such a lapse of memory. However, she seemed to gain some reassurance in the explanation that unacceptable events are sometimes unconsciously repressed from memory, and left the consultation in good spirits. Her period of amnesia, as far as could be determined, was now clear. She seemed free of any intention or impulse to withdraw from her marriage.

A number of days passed. Then came the following letter:

Tues—

Dear Doctor,

Remembering my visit to —— brought me a great deal of relief, to begin with.

Just being able to recall the trip seemed enough, but now that I've had time to think about it and all that occurred, it's more painful than I ever thought possible.

How can I be sure that I remember all that happened, even now? How can I know that it won't happen again? I wonder if I'll ever be sure of anything again.

I can't even recall ——'s colour schemes and I know that would probably be the first thing I'd notice.

My head hurts right on top. It has ever since the day I was down there to see you. I think it must be my eyes—I see little red and green specks—and I'm covered with some kind of rash.

*baby please be quite dear lord don't let me lose patience with
her she's too sweet and innocent and my self-control*

Though unsigned, most of the message had plainly been written by Eve White. Had some child scribbled those additional words on the uncompleted page and, perhaps as a whim, posted it in an already addressed envelope? Could Eve White herself have decided to disguise her characteristic handwriting and add this inconsequential note? And if so, why?

Within a week her husband called requesting another appointment

for her without delay. He seemed at his wits' end. Eve, he said, had gone into town without consulting him and had bought a great array of expensive clothes. Moreover, nothing now seemed to relieve her headaches, and there had been more black-outs.

Sitting in the consulting-room again, Eve quietly but positively denied having sent the letter. She said she clearly remembered beginning a letter to the doctor, but she had not finished it. For the new clothes which had so angered her husband she had no explanation.

"I never saw them, Doctor," she said, her light-blue eyes puzzled and intent. "I never saw them until Ralph took me to the wardrobe and showed them to me."

Their income, though sufficient for ordinary expenses, would not pay for such extravagance. Eve made most of her own clothing. When she had looked in the wardrobe and seen half a dozen luxurious evening gowns, several pairs of I. Miller shoes, the new coat, the lingerie, she had stepped back aghast, her equanimity profoundly shaken.

Telling about it now, her voice lost its monotonous calm. For the first time her doctor saw Eve's eyes grow moist. As if in apology, she mentioned her headache, saying it was now quite severe. Then she looked silently at the man from whom she sought help as if there were something she *must* say, though strong forces seemed to work against it. The doctor involuntarily took a deeper breath.

"Doctor . . ." the young woman said. She lowered her head a little as if to avoid something she dare not face directly. Her unfailing composure was at last broken. Her small hands, lying as usual on the arms of her chair, knotted slowly into tight fists.

"If you hear voices . . . what does it mean . . . ? If you really hear it . . . with no one there . . . ?" She sobbed briefly. "I know what it means." Her posture tightened. "Madness!" she gasped. "The State Hospital . . . Bonnie . . ." Her voice was scarcely audible. "My little Bonnie . . ."

Auditory hallucinations are indeed alarming. Eve White was right in concluding that they plainly indicate psychosis, serious mental disorder.

"For several months," she finally admitted, "I've heard the voice occasionally." Now she could not escape it. It was always a woman's voice and somehow familiar. It spoke jauntily, often using vulgar phrases.

The doctor was struck by several points. Psychotic patients who

Julie

Dear Doctor,

Remembering my visit
brought me a great
to begin with.

On top. It has ever since
the day I was down there
to see you. I think it must
be my eyes. I see little red
& green specks - and I'm covered
with some kind of rash.

Baby please be quite dear hard
don't let me lose patience with her
she's too sweet and innocent and
my self-control

experience auditory hallucinations are sometimes terrified at what the voices say, but seldom find the experience of hearing them alarming in itself. They almost never regard the hallucinations as an indication of mental disorder.

Eve White's reactions were those of a normal person to what, theoretically, could happen only to a person with a grave psychosis.

The physician was able to assure her that he did not consider her psychotic. But Eve White was clearly frightened and baffled. Speaking softly again, in her characteristic steady voice, she returned to the episode of the clothes. Assistants at the stores where she tried to return them had insisted it *was* she who had bought them. She spoke again of the voice she had heard. She hesitated. There was perhaps a minute or more of silence.

The brooding look in Eve's eyes became a dazed stare. Suddenly her posture began to change. Her body slowly stiffened until she sat rigidly erect. The lines of her face seemed to shift in a barely visible, slow, rippling transformation. Closing her eyes, she winced as she pressed her hands to her temples, twisted them as if to combat sudden pain. A slight shudder passed over her entire body.

Then the hands lightly dropped. The blue eyes popped open. There was a quick reckless smile. In a bright unfamiliar voice the patient said, "Hi, there, Doc!"

With a soft intimate syllable of laughter, she crossed her legs, carelessly swirling her skirt, and settled more deeply into the cushions of the chair. The constrained posture of Eve White had melted into buoyant repose. One foot began a small, rhythmic, rocking motion.

Still busy with his own unassimilated surprise, the doctor heard himself say, "How do you feel now?"

"Why just fine—never better! How you doing yourself, Doc?"

Eve looked straight into his eyes. Her eyelids flicked and opened wide again. She tossed her head lightly, flirtatiously. Her face was fresh and marvellously free from its habitual signs of underlying stress. She seemed barely able to restrain laughter.

"She's been having a real rough time," this girl said carelessly. "I feel downright sorry for her sometimes. She's such a dope though. . . . What she puts up with from that sorry Ralph White—and all her mooning over the little brat!"

She leaned forward. "Would you give me a cigarette, please, Doc?" He handed her a cigarette and then, lighting it, said, "Who is 'she'?" "Why, Eve White, of course. Your saintly little patient."

"But aren't you Eve White?" he asked.

"That's for laughs," she exclaimed, a ripple of mirth in her tone. "Why, you ought to know better than that, Doc!" An impish smile flickered over her childlike face as she said softly: "I know you *real* well, Doc . . . and I kind of like you. I bet you're a good dancer, too."

Disclaiming any special talents for the dance, the doctor said, "Can you tell me anything more about those dresses that upset your husband so much?"

"I ain't got no husband," she replied promptly and emphatically. "Let's get that straight now." She grinned broadly.

"Well, who *are* you?" he asked incredulously.

"Why, I'm Eve Black," she said (giving Mrs. White's maiden name). "I'm me and she's herself. I like to live and she don't. . . . Those dresses—well, I got out the other day, and I needed something fit to wear. I like good clothes. Not those prim little jobs she has. So I just went into town and bought what I wanted. I charged 'em to her husband, too!" She began to laugh softly.

Instead of the gentleness and restraint of the vanished Eve White, there sparkled in this newcomer a rippling energy, a greedy appetite for fun. She spoke casually of Eve White and her problems, always using *she* or *her* in every reference, always respecting the strict bounds of a separate identity.

It was also immediately apparent that her voice was different, as was the basic idiom of her language. Perhaps because of the easy laxness of this girl's posture and her more vigorous movements, she seemed somehow more voluptuously rounded than Eve White. A thousand minute alterations of manner, gesture and expression all argued that this could only be another woman. We cannot even say just what all these differences were. But they profoundly distinguished from Eve White the carefree girl who had taken her place. This was a vivid mutation, a seeming example of rare dual personality.

In contrast to her predecessor, talking was easy for Eve Black.

"What can you tell me about Eve White?" the doctor asked.

"I can tell you plenty, Doc," she said, childishly eager. "I know lots

and lots of things about her she don't know herself. For one thing, she's sick of that husband. She and her fine airs about always having to do the *right thing* even if it kills her."

"Is it because of little Bonnie?" he asked.

"Little Bonnie, little Bonnie, little Bonnie! That's all she can think about. Oh, the kid's all right most of the time. But why should a girl fret all the time about a four-year-old child?"

"Don't you *love* your daughter?"

"My daughter! I don't *have* no child, Doc. Not me. I like to have a good time—like to live. Bonnie's *her* child."

When asked if Eve White's all-absorbing devotion to Bonnie was genuine, she hesitated for a moment. "Yes, Doc, I reckon you'd say that's real. . . . But it's silly. . . ."

Eve Black did not deny that the body from which she spoke was also the body of Eve White, or that from it the little girl had been born. But she still insisted that she herself was not a mother, that she was not married to Ralph White "or to anybody else either."

"Where were you when the baby was born?" the doctor inquired.

A triumphant flash of mischief crossed her face. "Now, Doc, that's one for you to answer! There's an awful lot I don't understand. But I do know I'm not her and she's not me. Now, Eve White would worry about all those questions you've been asking, but not me."

"Is she worrying about them?"

"That's one trouble she's got she don't know about! She don't know anything about me. . . ." She broke off suddenly and a flash of defiance lit her eyes. "And don't you go and tell her either! When I get out I do like I please and it's none of her business. Lately I've been getting out a lot more, too."

She could not tell the doctor what happened to Eve White when she herself "got out" and went on her merry way. She was able to maintain awareness, she claimed, of nearly everything Eve White did, and had access most of the time to her thoughts and her memory. She did not, however, always take advantage of this. Often she found the other's thoughts and activities so boring that she withdrew her attention for long periods and occupied herself with plans and fancies of her own. On the other hand, Eve White had no suspicion of Eve Black's existence.

Eve Black could not, she admitted, emerge at will to express herself

freely in the body of the sober and retiring housewife. Until about a year ago, when Eve White had had a miscarriage, it had been only at long intervals that Eve Black was able to gain control and then, with one exception which she did not discuss, only for brief periods.

The doctor was aware that Eve White's headaches and black-outs had begun soon after the miscarriage suffered a few months before her first interview.

"What gave her those headaches," the new Eve said, "was trying to keep me from getting out. She didn't know what was going on but when she tried to stop me, her head would give her hell."

Sometimes, but not always, after Eve Black had been "out" Eve White was left with the memory of a black-out. There were occasions too when she had been left with other consequences of her unrecognized twin's activities. With a flashing roll of her eyes this bold girl began to laugh. "About a week ago I was out dancing nearly all night and got right well polluted. You ought've seen her when she woke up the next morning and found herself with the hangover! It was a beauty. She didn't know what it was and she was scared half to death."

"But didn't you feel the hangover yourself?" the doctor asked.

"Me? Of *course* I didn't feel it! I wasn't out then. I wouldn't have cared to be out."

This lively Eve told of several other occasions when she had slipped back into retirement, leaving the other, innocent Eve to face various puzzling and unpleasant consequences. She could sometimes, but not regularly, do this of her own volition. At other times Eve White would replace her spontaneously. Thus she explained the outcome of the visit to Eve White's cousin Flo in Columbia. She had succeeded in emerging and had stayed "out" most of the time. When Ralph White called up and told her to come home, she not only refused but gave this man she disliked a piece of her mind, a mind that had nothing in common with that of his self-effacing wife. She herself had had a wonderful time in Columbia, where, as a stranger, she was able to do nearly anything she chose without any risk of being mistaken for Mrs. White. During this period she had entertained hope that she might "stay out" indefinitely, typically ignoring the difficulties that would arise. But despite her efforts to maintain control, the other Eve had reappeared and returned to Ralph.

The doctor, who was thinking that it was little wonder that Ralph

White sometimes lost his temper, now asked Eve Black what she would do should Eve White become aware of her presence and do everything possible to keep her "in."

"I'll fight," she said with vehemence. After a moment's pause, she added, "I'm getting stronger than she is. Each time I come out she gets weaker."

The doctor asked what would happen if this continued.

"Then the body will be mine," she replied with assurance.

She talked freely, often expressing disdain for Mrs. White and for Ralph, who also, she said, knew nothing about her. When she was asked if she herself had ever had physical relations with Ralph, her eyes flared with indignation. The quick reply snapped out, "Definitely not!"

Then the doctor asked: "If it was you in Columbia with Flo and Jack, why didn't they recognize you? How did they go on believing it was Eve White?"

"Well, for one thing, they don't know about me. And when I have to, I can put on a pretty good job of acting like Eve White—even to saying dopey things and being real mousy, like I generally do if I happen to run into Ralph. Naturally I try not to come out if he's going to be around. It's a real strain, I tell you, but I couldn't very well act like my own self around her family, could I?" She chuckled to herself. "Flo and Jack did seem to feel she was mighty lively and happy, at that. They talked about it several times."

On rare occasions, she told the doctor, she actually had purposely precipitated herself into the family circle to quarrel suddenly with Ralph, scold Bonnie, or indulge in a tantrum. At such times she quickly subsided, often being extinguished by forces which she could not successfully resist or clearly describe.

During her longer periods "out," Eve Black said that she regularly avoided the family and friends and sought only the company of strangers. At the doctor's request she now demonstrated her skill in playing the role of Eve White, imitating the other's tone of voice, gestures and attitudes. She seemed to take a childish pride in this accomplishment.

About the voice that had so alarmed the other Eve she said, "It was just me. I've never been able to influence her thoughts or make her do a thing I wanted her to, and not till the last week or so was I ever able to make her hear me like that. It seemed to help me when I wanted to

get out. She'd get so upset she couldn't do much to stop me. You really ought've seen her the other day. Ralph was giving her hell and I got kind of sick of it. Before I knew it I shouted to her, 'Knock the old creep's block off!'

"Did Ralph hear you?" the doctor inquired attentively.

"Of course not, Doc! But *she* heard me all right."

CHAPTER 2

DURING this first hour's interview with the capricious woman who called herself Eve Black, the doctor had often reminded himself that Ralph White was outside in the waiting-room. Eve White's auditory hallucinations established beyond a doubt the deep gravity of her illness; the doctor thought she should enter the hospital connected with the local University Medical School. For this her husband must give his consent, but would he believe the doctor's strange and disturbing report?

It was decided that the husband must meet Eve Black in person. Otherwise he might lose confidence in the doctor and, perhaps, refuse to let his wife be admitted to the hospital.

With this in mind he asked the patient, "What do you think we ought to do now?"

"Lord, Doc," she said, smiling amiably, "watching you work with her so long I've got to kind of like you. I'm willing to try most anything you say."

He asked if she would be willing to talk with Ralph White.

"Why should I talk with him, Doc?" she answered, a little startled. "I don't want nothing to do with him."

The necessity of Eve White's going into the hospital was then carefully explained. The girl listened politely but made it plain that she did not relish the idea of finding herself in a "nuthouse ward," and showed little concern about Eve White's prognosis.

"However loony she may get," she insisted blithely, "it won't have nothing to do with me."

The doctor then told this girl that the auditory hallucinations, no matter how one might account for them, suggested that, without proper treatment, Eve White might become much worse. If she became profoundly irrational, she might have to remain confined in an institution

for many months, perhaps years. Because of her husband's limited financial resources, commitment to the State Hospital would be her only choice. With Eve White confined thus, there would be no place for Eve Black to go, nothing very interesting to do when she emerged for her "times out."

As the point about confinement sank in slowly, the debonair girl was forced to agree that her own future would be jeopardized if Eve White grew worse. "I think you got something there, Doc," she said reluctantly.

She agreed then for the co-tenant of her body to go into the hospital, and promised not to disrupt treatment. She also agreed to refrain from whatever she did that (according to her) resulted in Eve White's hearing voices. But despite the doctor's emphatic warnings, she would not actually promise to do all she could to relieve the other's headaches.

"Why, if I did that, Doc, I might not ever be able to get out again."

Eve Black did, however, agree to reveal her identity to Ralph White.

Sitting with the husband in another room, the doctor wondered how he should prepare this deeply worried man for what he was to encounter. Any effort to account for his wife's puzzling behaviour through the assumption of "another personality in her body" might well impress him as a far-fetched psychiatric theory. Also, any preliminary discussion might make it impossible for him to be an unbiased observer.

So it was decided to let Ralph first *see* this woman who called herself Eve Black. He had lived with his wife for almost seven years. Certainly he should be able to recognize her through any disguise; though it may not be possible for strangers to tell one identical twin from the other, the husband of either seldom has difficulty. The recognition is probably achieved through thousands of small items of perception, data from the dim edge of awareness.

When this husband was brought into the presence of Eve Black he was, of course, confronted with an infinity of physical detail that had long been familiar. Contradicting all this came the cheeky, unfamiliar voice in which Eve Black said that she had never married him, that she was not Bonnie's mother. Anatomically this was the face Ralph knew, but all that it expressed was alien. The small involuntary movements through which a countenance reflects feeling were not those he had ever seen in the face of his wife.

At the beginning of the interview, it seemed to the physician that

Ralph White, though amazed and genuinely distressed, clung to the idea that nervous instability and emotional stress had led his wife to adopt this unfamiliar attitude. Patiently he tried to reason with her as one might with a child in a tantrum. Finally, despair and something akin to awe seemed to possess him. Grasping for what he knew to be his wife's deepest feelings, Ralph White slowly said, "Bonnie . . . our little girl . . . what about Bonnie . . . ?"

"Why ask me?" Eve Black interrupted him carelessly. "I got nothing to do with your child—or with you either." Her eyes drifted from him. She leaned forward a little and absent-mindedly began to rub a knee.

"These darn nylon stockings she puts on! They always make me itch!" She turned to the physician, arching her dark brows. "How long, Doc, does all this have to go on?"

AFTER leaving the room with the physician Ralph freely granted permission for the patient to enter the hospital.

"The longer I looked at her," he said, "the stranger she seemed to me. It's just as though I'd never seen her before in my whole life. . . . But this brings some kind of sense to a lot that didn't fit together before."

Returning to the room where Eve Black, sitting relaxed and apparently unperturbed, awaited him, the physician was faced with another problem: to "locate" the patient who was to receive treatment. Perhaps if the present Eve could be hypnotized the other personality might somehow be brought out. This girl said she had no objections, but several attempts to hypnotize her were unsuccessful. Though Eve White was subsequently put under hypnosis on many occasions, Eve Black always remained refractory.

After some discussion the girl suggested that the physician call Eve White by name. Then she fell silent. Quite immobile, she appeared to concentrate, in some way, to make herself co-operative in the attempt. Her eyes closed as the name "Eve White" was called.

A moment later they slowly opened, now quiet, cautious. This face wore the habitual expression of Eve White, a delicate poise almost masking the faint lines of tension. Her legs assumed a more sedate position, with knees and feet together. She gave the impression of one whose attention has been momentarily distracted, who suspects she may have missed a few words of the conversation.

"What happened?" asked the physician.

"I don't know," she said in her slow, precise voice. "Was it anything very much . . . ? I might have had a black-out . . . but I'm not sure."

She smiled as if just becoming aware of something pleasant. "My head, Doctor, the pain has all gone."

The physician now talked with Eve White at some length, trying to stir some latent awareness that might serve as a link between the two manifestations. Finally he asked:

"Do you ever have the feeling that deep down in you there's still somebody that you used to be, somebody you can't quite reach?"

She looked up at him with puzzled eyes. After pondering a few moments, she said, "I . . . I don't know what you mean."

He suggested then that she enter the hospital and noted that her reactions were those of one who had heard nothing of what he had said on this subject a little earlier to Eve Black. She seemed deeply relieved at the prospect. "I don't believe I could do otherwise, Doctor," she said. "Somehow, I dread the thought of being alone at home."

No hint of the brashness of the submerged Eve could be detected in the slender sedate little figure that left the consulting-room for the Hospital Admitting Office. The tired, delicate body even gave the doctor the illusion of weighing several pounds less than the boisterous, teasing girl who called herself Eve Black.

DURING many years of experience in psychiatry we had both often encountered manifestations that the layman would find astonishing. Why, then, did we find ourselves regarding this patient (or should one say these patients) with such uncommon interest?

The psychiatric manifestation called *dual* or *multiple personality* has been extensively discussed over several decades. The concept was hardly novel when Robert Louis Stevenson in 1886 published the story of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. In this eerie novel impossible bodily alterations accompanied the process by which an evil presence gained ascendancy in a hitherto benevolent person. But throughout the story we find a thread of reality that cannot be dismissed. Much of the effect of the tale lies in the definite implication that in each of us similarly malign forces perhaps lie dormant.

It has been presumed for many years that so-called dual personalities

arise through the dissociation, or breaking into parts, of an originally integrated entity. Everyone, no doubt, becomes aware at times of inconsistent tendencies within himself. The ordinary person endeavours throughout life to suppress impulses and traits that prompt him towards unacceptable behaviour. There is reason to believe that some inclinations, rejected from one's awareness, maintain an existence not suspected by their possessor. The development of a secondary personality has been explained as coming about through the mobilization, organization, and eventually the emergence of what has been thus discarded or dissociated from consciousness.

Dual personality, however, is not commonly encountered—a careful survey of professional literature on the subject reveals only seventy-six cases that have displayed this disorder fully—and it is scarcely surprising that practical psychiatrists today should hold a sceptical attitude towards such marvels. There is no doubt that the concept at once arouses suspicions. If Eve White is an unhappy wife, restricted by her moral standards from seeking various pleasures, what could be more convenient for her than to simulate a dual personality? She can live it up as Eve Black and then return, untroubled, to her status as innocent wife and mother.

Neither of us, at the time our quiet little patient changed so spectacularly in the consulting-room, had ever seen anything that even remotely resembled a dual personality. Nor had we ever met another psychiatrist who had seen such a patient. Yet whatever one might choose to call what we witnessed when this patient became Eve Black—deliberate pretence, somnambulism, hysterical dissociation or dual personality—it was a performance or manifestation that demanded attention and study.

It seemed plain that Eve Black's activity played a major part in our patient's illness. How should treatment be planned? After some deliberation we decided against using electric shock or insulin coma treatment, measures which had for years proved helpful in dealing with psychotic disorders of many types. Though in text-books dual personality is often classed under the familiar term *hysteria*, neither of us felt that this patient should be so labelled, or that she would be likely to react as is usual in that common disorder. There was about this woman something that made us distinctly aware of the limitations of our knowledge, of the immense mysteries of human entity and of life.

We decided to feel our way as best we could, there being no distinct or reliable path that we could see to follow. Our experience had led us to be sceptical of the currently popular psychodynamic processes by which, through the manipulation of analogies and symbols, it is possible to arrive at easy, and almost identical, explanations of all cases. But we remained deeply impressed with the value of communication between patient and doctor.

With Eve White in the hospital, we hoped to give her relief from an acute situation and we planned to establish a helpful relationship which would encourage her to talk about her life and feelings. Should Eve Black reappear, we hoped to communicate with her also. But it was the tense, serious little wife and mother, and she only, whom we saw and talked with during the first few days in the hospital. No faint suggestion of Eve Black slipped out during this period when her docile alternate was under constant and carefully planned surveillance. We considered it important to learn what she might do when alone and, so far as she could know, entirely free from scrutiny. Nurses and others reported no change in her even demeanour, no rift in the orderly routine of her days.

Often she sat alone in her room reading a copy of Palgrave's *Golden Treasury*, or verses cut from newspapers and magazines which she had over the years pasted into a scrapbook. The poems she liked best were those dealing with the basic values and virtues often regarded by the sophisticated as simple or even banal.

Like most of her personal interests this pleasure in verse had remained a solitary preoccupation, not discovered by us until she was in the hospital where it could be observed that she turned to it as to a familiar refuge. Formally and quietly she discussed her preferences. Among the favourite lines committed to memory that she often dwelt on silently, she mentioned this stanza from Tennyson's *In Memoriam*:

*I held it truth, with him who sings
To one clear harp in divers tones,
That men may rise on stepping-stones
Of their dead selves to higher things.*

In the hospital environment Eve White seemed to feel some degree of security or protection. She freely discussed the early years of her life. Her father, a farmer and country storekeeper, had been able to provide

a comfortable living for the family but very few luxuries. So far as she recalled, she had felt wanted and loved. Yes, she supposed she could say that both her mother and father seemed warm and understanding. They were not arbitrary about discipline, nor did she remember them as pampering any of their children.

"As a child," she said, "I must have been very sensitive to criticism and punishment." She felt quite sure that her parents had not punished her too frequently or severely. "Perhaps it was because they did it so seldom," she suggested, "that it sometimes hurt my feelings and I couldn't understand." Most of the scoldings and punishments she received had been given by her mother. The father was away at work nearly all day. She believed that her mother had been fair and not unduly strict.

Important in her memory of early childhood was the birth of twin sisters when she was about five years old. She recalled this event as chiefly pleasant and exciting. She must have felt jealous of the twins sometimes, she supposed, but she could recall no enduring sense of rivalry, no tragic sense of displacement. Though she was an only child until the twins were born, she had always enjoyed the close companionship of Flo, her cousin who lived nearby.

A long time before the twins had been born, she had experienced a good deal of apprehension about an incident she still remembered vividly. There was a large ditch of stagnant, slimy water under a bridge in the woods nearby. The woods, particularly in twilight, seemed mysterious and beautiful but haunted with danger. A man had drowned in this ditch one night. Eve White believed she had been present when his body was dragged out next day, for she recalled her horror and fear at the sight, and her vague but powerful new realizations about death.

What she actually saw as a small child soon became entangled with overheard snatches of conversation, with elaborate fantasies spun by older children to shock the hearer. One way or another, she had come to believe for a while that a malign and dangerous monster dwelt in the stagnant waters of the ditch. She recalled dreams and daylight fantasies in which the monster threatened and pursued her. The deadly thing was pictured as a great scaly reptilian form, larger than a grown man, with baleful and merciless eyes.

But on the whole Eve White felt that her childhood had been happy;

even the dangerous inhabitant of the ditch, she now felt, probably had afforded more interest and excitement than distress.

During this period of observation nothing was observed in Eve White that suggested a masked or incipient schizophrenia, the familiar delusory mental disorder. Her restraint and propriety reflected only normal timidity, not the chill and glassy aloofness, the inexplicable withdrawal from life of the schizophrenic.

After much consideration, we decided to seek another audience with Eve Black. Though we felt confident that Eve White should know more about her alternate, both of us felt some reluctance at simply confronting our co-operative and insecure patient with a forthright account of Eve Black, of whom she appeared entirely unaware.

On two occasions when Eve White had been hypnotized, amnesia for the period of "sleep" had been obtained. Hypnosis was therefore induced again. While the demure little patient sat with eyes closed, Eve Black was called by name and asked to speak.

The eyes opened promptly. Even before they moved, or so it seemed to us, there could be no doubt about whom we dealt with. Almost instantaneously the figure relaxed into the buoyant ease of Eve Black.

"Well, Doc," she said in the husky, brisk voice so unlike that of the other, "what you did just now sure made it easier for me to get out. I think it made it easier on her too."

Her bright eyes roved briefly about the hospital room as if in amused curiosity.

"I know what this place looks like all right," she explained, "but I just thought I'd like to see for myself." She smiled, her affable face at ease, and then said casually, "She's really feeling a lot better. She's still scared, all right. I can tell that. But nothing like what she was a week ago."

This Eve was at first a little negative to the suggestion that the other be informed of her existence. She questioned the influence this might have on her own ability to "come out" and be herself. There was a way, she admitted, in which her alternate could oppose her and prevent her getting out. Just how this power worked Eve Black could not explain, but it varied with the other Eve's state of health and security. "She don't really know what she's about, either, but just struggles hard to keep herself from what she thinks of as going to pieces."

In Eve White's recent improvement this Eve had found added difficulties. She had, she admitted, tried unsuccessfully to "come out a couple of times for just a little while" and investigate the psychiatric ward.

The physician then suggested that, with Eve White aware of her, there might be some lessening of the peculiar conflict. She was, however, requested to avoid conduct during her periods of ascendancy, or pressures while submerged, that would damage the other; and she was again reminded of the dangers to herself should Eve White become psychotic.

The confident girl before us was not immediately compliant to all these suggestions. She did not seem in the least cruel or vengeful, but rather stood in the role of a disinterested observer.

"I got nothing against her," she said, speaking of Eve White. "I don't wish her any bad luck. But I got myself to think about, too; I can't keep my mind on her and her worryings all the time."

When Eve Black did agree to behave with reasonable discretion, her words of compliance seemed a little too glib to rely on, but she finally gave whole-hearted consent to the doctor's explaining about her to Eve White.

Then, mentioning several minor flirtations she had enjoyed in the past few months, she began to laugh with warm amusement. Lively and extremely contagious little gusts of mirth interrupted her as she explained how she had successfully evaded the consequences of each adventure.

"Her face will be a sight to see if you tell her about the time I was out at the Lido Club," she said finally. "Had some champagne cocktails with a fellow there. I like to sing, you see. Well, about two o'clock I got out in the middle of the floor and really let 'em have it. They liked it, too. Everybody stopped dancing. The orchestra stopped. I got better and better. The pianist started up again to accompany me. They kept on clapping and stamping and cheering. I put some charge in it when I got to 'Rockin' and Rollin'—*Rockin' and rollin' / All night long. . .*"

With a little toss of her head she carried a snatch of the tune for a moment. "But what really sent 'em," she said, "was when I stood there in the middle of that dance floor with the spotlight on me and let 'em have 'Sixty Minute Man.'"

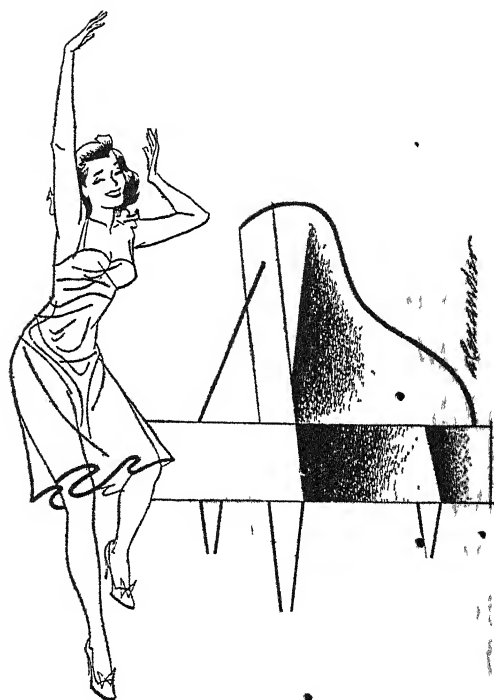
IN OUR attempt to tell Eve White about the other personality we

proceeded circumspectly. She seemed confident that the black-outs of which she had complained were probably nothing more than brief fainting spells caused by the severe headaches which preceded them. Sometimes when she came to us, however, shortly after suffering a black-out, she had seemed uneasy, less assured that they had lasted only a few moments. She had not checked with watch or clock to obtain evidence of their duration. Had there been some vague inner feeling, warning her that doing so might add to her stress and bewilderment?

From her parents we learned that many years ago she had suffered from periods of stupor or delirium that varied in length from a few minutes to an hour or more. The patient herself remembered being told by them that during early childhood she often walked in her sleep. She recalled no particular uneasiness about her sleepwalking on the part of her parents. It must have begun very early, a few months after the twin sisters were born. After a year or two it gradually disappeared. It did, however, recur once or twice in her early teens. Once she had walked out into the living-room where her parents were sitting. Next day when they told her about it she asked them to tell her exactly what she did.

Her eyes had been open, they said, and apparently she could see what she was doing, for she avoided objects that lay in her way. She had turned towards them when they addressed her, and indeed spoken in reply. Her gaze seemed inattentive to the immediate surroundings, but not troubled or unnatural. She seemed not so much sleeping as incompletely conscious. They had told her she was responsive to persuasion. After being led back to bed she had slept on through the night. Next morning she was unable to remember anything about it at all.

Would she be upset, she was asked, if such an episode should occur during one of her black-outs? Eve seemed to give this possibility little thought, but said she found nothing particularly alarming in what she remembered being told about her sleepwalking long ago. No attempt was made to hurry the patient towards any concept of serious personality dissociation. What she remembered of her somnambulism was utilized in discussions of the varying degrees of consciousness in commonplace situations, such as concussion. She accepted without undue apparent apprehension our statement that during her black-out in the consulting-room, just before coming to the hospital, more than an hour had elapsed. With what seemed to be well-controlled surprise she listened as we told



her she had spoken and had opened her eyes soon after losing consciousness, that her manner and voice had changed considerably and that she had seemed remarkably free from worry about her problems. She was encouraged to think of the lapse as having some points of resemblance to the sleepwalking of her childhood. Our experience with several patients who had carried on activities during brief periods of amnesia was then discussed.

Characteristically laconic, Eve White seemed to react with mixed feelings. To be faced with evidence that during periods of unconsciousness she had behaved in ways unknown to herself was disquieting. On the other hand there was an advantage in the patient's having now some explanation for the disturbing events which heretofore had seemed an impossible paradox. Could she, for instance, actually have gone into town to the stores and heedlessly bought all those lavish clothes while in such a state? It was as if with one hand she seemed to grasp for relief in such an explanation, while with the other she pushed it away as fantastic, and in some new way bizarrely terrifying. Her pupils had dilated, giving her intent eyes a darker hue. "Really, Doctor," she said in a low, serious tone, "there wasn't one of those dresses in which I could have felt . . . well . . . like a decent woman."

During the following days the performance of acts without apparent volition was discussed. Encouraging examples of recovery from serious cases of amnesia and automatism were cited. Gradually emphasis was shifted to the striking differences in manner, appearance and behaviour of those manifestations often referred to as *alternating consciousness* or *dual personality*.

We did not, at this point, use those expressions, feeling that they were more likely to distort the patient's ideas than to clarify them, likely, even, to provide her with a scapegoat. If the situation we confronted was indeed the result of dissociation, then it seemed logical to believe that help might lie in the direction of bringing together the unlike elements.

Though Eve White came to accept the fact that behaviour incomprehensible to her had taken place during periods of amnesia, she seemed instinctively to evade some aspects of realization. If real progress were to be made, might it not be necessary for her eventually to regard whatever occurred during black-outs as of her own doing, whether or not she might, in the ordinary sense, be held responsible?

During this period we also had a number of interviews with Eve Black, hypnotizing Eve White to obtain the other's presence. Without reluctance this debonair girl now agreed to help in the attempt to acquaint the other with herself. She had, as we have said, claimed to be responsible for the objectively unreal voice that Eve White had fearfully reported. Perhaps, through this hallucinatory form of communication, this Eve might manifest herself to the other convincingly. Good-naturedly she agreed to try. Some moments after Eve White had been summoned, Eve Black was addressed by name and requested to speak directly to her alternate.

The response was immediate and impressive. Eve White's familiar face went suddenly blank. The deeply ingrained control shattered like an eggshell. The habitually guarded eyes shone luminous. Absence of all expression was followed by naked astonishment. Catching her breath with a scarcely audible sigh she slowly whispered, "It just can't be."

The patient was profoundly shaken and disturbed. Her doctor remained with her the rest of the afternoon, reassuring her and helping her adjust her feelings to a realization that she found weirdly terrifying.

CHAPTER 3

EVE WHITE remained in the hospital for approximately two weeks. She received no specific treatment other than the psychotherapy we have described. She seemed to gain steadily in strength and confidence and to make general improvement. After a brief period of consternation on hearing the alternate announce herself, she seemed to benefit from having an explanation, however strange, for the voice which she had heard previously, and found in it relief from the fear that psychosis was impending. She never again heard Eve Black's voice or in any other way came in contact with her directly.

During long interviews each day we were gathering further details about Eve White's career. As time passed she became increasingly articulate, and it seemed helpful to her to express herself. Despite this, one felt that she was in some important respects a person for whom real intimacy was peculiarly difficult.

During this period we were able to interview Eve White's parents several times. When Ralph White had first attempted to describe their

daughter's condition to them they had come promptly to the hospital, at first sceptical and a little distrustful of the doctor. But after they had visited her and, later, interviewed Eve Black, their point of view changed. Through them, through Eve White's sisters, her cousin Flo and other members of the family, we were able to obtain valuable historical detail of the patient's life. At that time, as was to become our practice generally, we made extensive tape recordings of all that the parents could tell us.

We had both been surprised and doubting when in an early interview Eve Black told us she had enjoyed an independent life ever since Eve White's childhood. We had felt that she was probably a product of the patient's recent emotional stresses, but she told us freely of episodes twenty or more years ago in which she had allegedly emerged, usually to engage in acts of mischief or disobedience. She explained her ungrammatical speech, so unlike her alternate's, by saying she had never bothered to pay attention while Eve White was at school.

Since Eve White, whose word on any matter always proved good, had no access to the other's current awareness or her memory, it had been impossible through her to check directly on Eve Black's stories. She was able, however, to confirm reports of certain punishments she had received in childhood for deeds unknown to her but described to us by Eve Black.

Several of these stories were substantiated through the parents. Eve White's parents impressed us as sober, conservative citizens of a small rural community. Throughout their daughter's long struggle to regain her health, they were faithfully co-operative and always loyal to her, even in situations which they must have found totally bewildering.

The parents both clearly recalled that once they had had to punish their ordinarily good and conforming six-year-old daughter for having disobeyed their specific rule against wandering through the woods to play with children living approximately half a mile away. On her return Eve had received a hearty whipping despite her desperate and persistent denials of wrongdoing and disobedience.

Almost as surprising as disobedience and lying in such a good child was the daring with which she had wandered home through the darkening woods. Eve was timid and had for some time shown abnormal fear about going near the ditch under the bridge where the man had been found dead. This evening she had been seen to loiter there boldly.

Eve Black had previously described this incident to us in some detail, expressing amusement about having been able to withdraw and leave the other Eve to appreciate the sensations of the whipping. Though Eve Black, when "in," preserved indirect awareness of the outer world through Eve White's thoughts and perceptions, she insisted that she was then totally immune from any physical pain or other sensations experienced by the latter. The adult Eve White recalled this punishment and several others which she had had no way of understanding and which had sometimes deeply confused her in her relations with her parents. Even after being told in detail what had occurred, she was never able to gain memory of the experiences of Eve Black for which she was punished, though extensive efforts were made, both with hypnosis and without, to bring this material to awareness.

There were other incidents related by Eve Black which the parents confirmed. For example, she admitted to having felt annoyance with her twin sisters, which she once expressed by biting their toes hard enough to cause wild yelling. Though Eve White recalled no unkindness on her part towards her younger sisters, she had been punished several times for cruelty to them during their infancy.

When our patient was five or six years old, her cousin and close companion, Flo, was given for Christmas a doll which seemed to Eve inexpressibly lovely. As an adult she recalled in detail her longing for it, and a peculiar sense of emptiness or of rejection in finding not herself but Flo blessed with its possession.

When her reserve had been lessened under hypnosis, Eve White sometimes spoke at length about this early experience. Once or twice her eyes brimmed with tears. Revival of the old longing for this doll was a clue that could open and expose her present devotion to her actual child, an emotion she usually found it difficult to express freely.

When the doll belonging to Flo was found smashed to bits, evidence pointed to Eve as the culprit. Though she denied guilt, she was punished. The adult Eve White denied any recollection of breaking Flo's doll.

About this she wrote to us later as follows:

Why I made such a scene in your consulting-room over the china doll Flo had as a child is beyond me. I hope that outburst will be forgiven. You wanted me to bring back all I could remember of it. As well as I recall it was a china doll with golden hair and blue eyes. It was lovely:

Perhaps I envied her having it. When I look back I enjoyed just looking at it as she held it in her arms and rocked it as one does a baby. When it was broken it hurt me as much as it did Flo. To the best of my knowledge mother punished me because for some reason she thought I had broken it. I'm certain I didn't. That's all I can remember of it. I hope it is what you wanted to know.

Sincerely yours,
Eve White

Before this letter was posted Eve Black, during a brief period "out," found it. On another sheet of paper she typed a comment of her own which she sent with the other:

Hi Doc,

Our brainchild has a way with them big words, huh? You know, of course, I broke the china doll. I'd do it again. They thought Flo was so much. You should have seen her flaunting her pretty doll in my face. Sure I broke it and if I had got the tanning for it, which I didn't, I'd still be glad I broke it. I can't type so fancy and all like Eve White, but, hunt and peck and what have you, I can type too. If I said I was grateful for the patience you shown with me you'd sure as fire faint, so I won't say it. You know you're cute, remind me to tell you. Guess I'd better sign this thing one way or another, heck, I'll do it like madame.

Sincerely yours,
Eve Black

During the interview referred to above, and apparently suggested by the discussion of the doll, Eve White mentioned a blue china cup. She remembered playing with it in the company of her cousin Flo, when she was about five years old. The incident seemed to hold some sharp flavour of the past for she kept coming back to it. An unaccustomed animation came into her voice as she tried to find some association that would bring recollection of surrounding events. Despite continued attempts nothing further emerged. Eve Black denied any memory of the cup.

As we talked with Eve White's parents, it seemed more and more likely that the division between the two personalities must have been much less sharp during the patient's childhood and adolescence, the contrast less consistent and spectacular, the disturbances brief and rare. They ceased entirely after Eve White's marriage and did not recur until after the miscarriage which has been mentioned before.

BEFORE our patient left the hospital Eve Black had emerged spontaneously on several occasions. A young man, admitted about a week previously to recuperate from a relatively mild alcoholic episode, had, during his first hours of discomfort and remorse, found in Eve White a soothing, uncritical and maternal figure to whom to turn. Recovered from his illness and dejection, one day this man sat alone with an open book in a small recreation-room. Glancing up, he saw what at first he took to be a familiar figure. Eve Black had playfully tiptoed into the room. Now like a child who has succeeded in startling an adult by saying "boo," she broke into soft warm laughter. In flagrant contrast with the frail, retiring Eve White he thought he saw before him, this woman pulsated with energy. Catching and holding his glance with bold bright eyes, she took a few buoyant steps forward and casually sat on the arm of his chair. "How you doing, boy?" she asked.

Then like an energetic kitten she was up, swinging with a strong supple step to the gramophone across the room and putting on a record. Turning towards her companion she stood for a few seconds, her shoulders and hips responding just perceptibly and perfectly to the rhythm. Her whole face lit with a fresh inviting smile.

"Come on, boy . . . dance with me," she urged softly.

A minute or two later the floor nurse came in. Having known only Eve White, she was astonished and delighted to find this quiet and troubled patient throwing herself with such spirit into the dance. After brief observation she decided, however, that it was time for Mrs. White to return to her room.

Nothing unseemly had occurred, the nurse reflected, but she felt a sense of uneasiness at the incredible change in Mrs. White. For Mrs. White—of all people!—had in some inexpressible way seemed stimulating and provocative.

Later, Mr. Smathers, the male patient, talked at some length with an assistant-doctor on the psychiatric section about his personal reactions. Looking back, he didn't know how to describe the peculiar feeling he'd had. Well as he knew Mrs. White, he found himself thinking someone must be impersonating her. But instead of an impersonation this just wasn't like her at all! It seemed for a moment that he was about to lose his grip on himself. For, abruptly, the idea got hold of him that he was with somebody else . . . somebody else altogether!

It was summer and a number of medical students were working as attendants in the hospital. One of these took up duties on the psychiatric section a few days before Eve White was dismissed. His hours began after supper when medical duties were few. He was thoughtful and sympathetic and liked to talk to the patients and help make the evening pleasant for them.

Though he was uninformed about Eve White's history, his attention was at once drawn to her, this delicately attractive young woman in whom he felt an inarticulate need for friendliness. Each evening he spent some time talking quietly with her. He found that she was familiar with some poems and music that held a personal significance for him; soon he began to feel he knew the essential qualities of her character.

Walking along the corridor late one night he scarcely noted that Eve White's light was on and the door ajar. She often read at this hour. A low, surreptitious whistle caught his attention. She was standing just inside the doorway. The rich slow voice that asked him for a cigarette made him suddenly tingle with surprise. Though Eve White had never smoked, it was not remarkable that she might decide to do so. She invited him to come in and talk for a moment.

Soon afterwards he was at the telephone calling the resident physician. He could not precisely state what had happened. Mrs. White had neither said nor done anything in the least irrational. He had never seen her so happy or so energetic. But something extraordinary had come about. Of that he was sure. His scalp seemed to prickle with the strangeness of what he had encountered, as he tried to frame for the resident his report on the profound impression of difference that had come over him.

WHAT DANGERS would be in store for our patient when she left the hospital? There seemed little reason to believe that Eve Black would not continue to emerge from time to time. It seemed evident that she was not a genuinely evil or vicious manifestation. But it had become plain that she could not be relied upon to fulfil a promise and that, when it suited her, she would lie in the reckless spirit of a child who almost feels that saying so may make it so. Though her voice and manner flaunted sexual challenge and promise, she apparently had no real inclination to consummate any of the adventures she took such joy in starting.

To dress conspicuously, to speak and move provocatively were ways to attract attention and promote the atmosphere of frolic and commotion that Eve Black inevitably sought. As the study of her reactions continued through subsequent months, our conviction grew that, despite all her vitality and sensuous challenge, this manifestation was limited by a deep and specific frigidity.

We had no assurance, however, that Eve Black would not involve herself and Eve White in minor indiscretions and misdemeanours. Our hope now was to learn better how Eve Black might be mollified and indirectly persuaded towards co-operation, through the responses of Eve White.

As the patient left the hospital with her husband, happy at the prospect of seeing Bonnie again, it seemed as if some ground had been gained. Ralph could now more whole-heartedly help her. Believing, in a limited but really meaningful sense, that it was not she who had reviled him in Columbia, that she had not simply lied to him about the clothes in the cupboard, he was now able to modify the blame he had heaped on her in the past.

When he had first met Eve Black two weeks earlier in our office, after watching her for a while with spellbound eyes he had said: "Why, that's exactly the way she looked—the way she was—when she threw those dishes at my head. That's who it was!"

On our first encounter with Eve Black we had asked ourselves at once how such a manifestation could have gone unrecognized, even for a minute, by the husband or parents. Eve Black had occasionally come out in their presence, but they had not really discovered her until she agreed to reveal herself to them in the physician's presence. Now it was evident that these people had been forced, for want of any other explanation, to think of those odd, wayward moments in Eve White's career as fits of temper, rare quirks of mood in a habitually docile, considerate woman. Who in their position, having in mind no trace of the multiple-personality concept, would be likely to suspect such a situation as that voluntarily revealed to us by the patient?

FOR ABOUT two months after the patient's release from the hospital, improvement continued. Eve White returned from time to time for interviews. She was free from headaches and had suffered no more black-outs

of which she was conscious. Occasionally there had been a lost lapse of time, brought to her attention by the clock or calendar, which indicated that her alternate had been in command.

Sometimes the telephone would ring and some strange male voice would ask for Eve Black. Occasionally she awoke in the morning with a taste like dry ashes in her mouth. Once she had found a small bottle of pungent perfume, a vivid red dress, and a few other small items of feminine apparel carefully hidden in a cupboard. Checking, she found that a relatively small amount of cash was missing from the drawer where she kept a little money saved for extras from housekeeping expenses. She winced at the thought of being seen in the dress, and her first impulse was to throw the things away at once. Remembering, however, that her counterpart had shown consideration (or caution) in limiting her purchases, she decided to leave everything as it was, hoping that co-operation to this degree might limit damages.

Usually the transitions occurred smoothly enough, for Eve Black seldom came out except when Mrs. White was alone or among strangers, and now Eve White was almost never left in unfamiliar surroundings or perplexing situations by her alternate's withdrawal. She told of one notable exception, however, when she had suddenly found herself on a busy street corner engaged in conversation with an unknown young soldier. Wide awake and in possession of all her faculties, she had concluded immediately that the alternate must have come here, must have been talking with this man for some time.

Eve White soon caught the gist of what had been going on. The man was expressing strong indignation, as if he considered himself unjustly misled. His new companion found it necessary to say very little. The contrast of her quiet dignity with the argument that must have been in progress seemed to affect him almost at once. His anger seemed to dissolve in bewilderment, and he soon mumbled some final expression of courtesy and hurried off.

Despite these inconveniences and tribulations, Eve White felt encouraged. Ralph had been very patient and seemed better able to express his affection. It was a joy to see little Bonnie happy. It was characteristic of this considerate woman to be grateful even for small things. She cherished every little item on which hope might be founded.

Now that Eve White knew about the other manifestation it was no

longer necessary to induce hypnosis in order to summon Eve Black. This was done with the patient's acquiescence each time she came for an interview. Eve Black, too, was on the whole encouraging in her reports. Mr. and Mrs. White were getting along a little better, she thought, though not as well as Eve White tried to tell herself. She herself wouldn't put up for five minutes with Ralph or with any of his ways. She had not meant for the other Eve to find the few simple things she'd bought for herself. She insisted she had a right to a little life of her own. She admitted that the money she took did not belong to her; but, with a shrug, casually maintained that she had to get along somehow. When asked if she would like to earn money that would be unquestionably her own, she replied in an amused playful tone:

"Now, Doc—you're always bringing up something like that. Sometimes you talk the way she thinks. Why would I want to fret at some piddling job? That ain't living."

About the soldier with whom Eve White had been confronted, Eve Black at first calmly professed ignorance. On being accused of lying, she was petulant, then with a warm smile said, "You can't believe just anything she tells you, Doc. She may try to act like a fancy little saint but she's human in her way, like the rest of us."

Finding that this explanation made no impression, she shifted her position in the chair. Crossing her legs, she gave her head a little toss and began to laugh softly.

"The poor scary thing couldn't have slept, I bet, if she hadn't told you about that. Of course, I know that fellow. Met him once before, at a dance in Columbia. Just a crazy kid. Seemed to like my singing and the way I danced. When I ran into him the other day I told him I'd go out with him that night. Then he got a little tiresome. Wanted it to be just the two of us—and at once. He kind of lacks finesse," she confided with blended *naïveté* and quasi-worldliness. "I wasn't born yesterday, Doc."

The young man had continued to urge her, increasing the vehemence of his persuasion as she tauntingly evaded him. She might have had to make a little disturbance to settle the affair, she admitted, with a kind of childish pride in the interest she had aroused: "I was just getting ready to tell him off, even if it took some shouting and might attract a crowd."

Then another and simple solution occurred to Eve Black. Let Eve

White do it! It would save a lot of bother and unpleasantness. Besides, there was something extremely amusing in the prospect of her goody-goody associate's having to handle the situation. Sometimes, not always, she could fade away like this by choice and leave the other to face her problem. This time it had worked precisely. Her lively eyes shone with fresh delight as she boasted innocently of her achievement.

THE RELATIVELY tranquil period subsequent to Eve White's treatment in hospital did not last. Soon, like a poorly rooted plant, the basic relationship between Mr. and Mrs. White seemed to wither steadily. They could offer each other only the lifeless shadow of companionship. As Ralph's frustration and discouragement increased, and he began to spend more time seeking diversion away from home, Eve became more remote. Her determination to preserve the marriage, however, did not alter.

Manifestations of Eve Black grew more troublesome. She gained control more often and flaunted her freedom with increasing boldness. On rare occasions she emerged deliberately before Ralph White to taunt and deride him. During interviews the doctor found her more openly determined to have her own way at any cost. Several times she took over and absented herself from the house when Bonnie had counted on her mother's being at home. The little girl had been carefully instructed to go next door and stay with the neighbours if she found herself alone. Usually no difficulty arose on this score, but neither parent found it possible to explain satisfactorily to the neighbours why they could not give regular notice of when Bonnie was to come. Nor could they make Bonnie understand why her mother would sometimes disappear after promising to read to her or cut out paper dolls. The child was told, of course, that her mother had spells of illness, that she would get better, and everything would be all right. But why certain things happened that frightened and bewildered the little girl—who could explain this?

Several months earlier, while the presence of Eve Black was still unsuspected, Ralph had brought his wife to the physician, insisting that the night before she had threatened to kill Bonnie. She had, he explained, actually put the cord of a Venetian blind round the child's throat and had seemed to be trying to strangle her. He had stopped her and in the ensuing quarrel had struck her lightly. Eve White, though distressed and bitterly hurt, had firmly denied his accusation.

It seemed preposterous to consider that Ralph would arrantly fabricate such an accusation. To the doctor it seemed perhaps even more difficult to conceive that this woman was lying or that she would ever under any circumstance harm her child. But he could not believe that Eve White was psychotic, or that she had been so. Could the husband, in all the stress under which he laboured, have honestly misjudged his perception? There seemed to be no satisfactory answer.

Some time after Eve Black had revealed herself, she was questioned about this episode. At first she denied it, insisting that Ralph was a liar. Some days later, however, her volatile mood had changed and she told a different story:

"Sure, Doc. I was just trying to tone down the little varmint. She started bawling and fretting. And I hadn't been out for a long time. I was working out some plans, and if the kid wasn't quiet it might mess me up."

Unabashed by the admission, she said casually that she would not have actually harmed the child. Because of the absence of serious malice in this scamp-like entity, we were prepared to believe her, that she had meant to threaten dramatically and punish a little.

With this incident in the background, both Mr. and Mrs. White were especially apprehensive about any intrusion on the part of Eve Black into the life of their daughter.

Once when Bonnie had been left alone the neighbours were not at home. Frightened by the approach of darkness, she had run wildly back towards the empty house. Tripping, she had fallen and skinned a knee. Ten minutes later Ralph came in from work. How long had this little girl been crying in her helplessness? How seriously was she injured? It was only a superficial abrasion but Ralph, in growing indignation, could not accurately estimate its gravity.

A little later when his wife appeared, still clad in the flashy red dress Eve Black had put on earlier that afternoon, he had lost the last secure hold he had on himself and was swept willy-nilly into a tide-run of honest wrath.

Large and small troubles continued to accumulate. After no word had come from the Whites for a longer period than usual, a short note was received by the doctor. It was signed with the initials E. B. In a careless scrawl was written:

Doc,

I think I ought to let you know. E. W. is quite ill. She tried to kill herself this morning. I was able to stop her. Ralph don't know about it. She's promised herself that nobody must ever know. I know you should. I'm not sure she won't try it again.

A telephone call was made. Eve White agreed to come for another interview without delay. She denied all knowledge of the note but admitted that she had been desperately unhappy and had thought of suicide. Because of Bonnie and because of her religious convictions, she felt that she would never take such a step. Then with painful reluctance she said that she had at last reached a decision to separate from her husband. She realized she could not look after her little girl adequately until she got better. So she had decided to give up her child, for ever if necessary, in order to protect her.

It was arranged for Bonnie to go and live with Mrs. White's mother and father, in the distant rural home where she herself had been born. Ralph was going to a city in another state with the intention of starting afresh in his business. Since living expenses would be increased by these moves, Eve strongly felt that she should find a job and provide for the major needs of herself and her daughter.

After the interview with Eve White, the other Eve was summoned. She first expressed pleasure in the plans for separation. "Maybe the poor old gal will get some sense in her yet," she said with an easy half-interested smile. No, she had not exaggerated what she wrote about in her note. She had been aware of her alternate's thoughts as they progressed to the awful resolution.

"She must have been half dazed, I guess," this Eve said, now a little more intent than usual. "She started into the bathroom and was so worked up she could hardly find her way. I could tell she was going after the razor and was going to cut her wrist. She was going to kill herself. I knew nobody'd be back for an hour or two to do anything about it. She'd be dead by then." Pausing now, she added wistfully, "And that would have meant I'd be dead too."

During the struggle to "get out," Eve Black said, it had seemed for a while that she might fail. "Something awful was on her mind, something I was never up against before." Shaking and unco-ordinated but with unswerving resolution, Eve White had banged open the medicine chest.

"She'd already grabbed the razor when I finally got out," Eve Black said. "I think she meant business, Doc."

That Eve White had not remembered this incident might be explained by something Eve Black had told us during an earlier interview. Then she had said that Eve White's memory was sometimes erased during short periods when she was still in control but struggling against her alternate in an unusually difficult, and for the time being indeterminate, contest for consciousness.

Approximately a week later, the household having been disbanded, Eve White moved to our city and began work with a large corporation situated only about fifteen miles from our offices. Behind her lay considerable experience in typing and bookkeeping, and for a short time in her teens she had operated a small telephone switchboard. She found a room in a modest boarding-house which she planned to share with another girl.

Was this merely progress from the frying pan into the fire? In her present condition would she be able to hold a job? For weeks Eve White had been steadily losing initiative and vitality. Was it possible that Eve Black, freed from the restraining influence of the Whites' home, might "come out" to stay? A bright, unworried butterfly would no more certainly perish.

On the other hand, Eve Black might become more co-operative. If she was representative of unrecognized tendencies in the other, then changes in Eve White's routine or freer expression of her emotion might soften the forces invisibly rebellious far within her. Or would appeasement serve chiefly to incite the rebellious drive? Would Eve Black, encouraged and emboldened, merrily cry havoc and loose the dogs of total war?

CHAPTER 4

DURING the next year we kept these two personalities under close observation. The patient usually came twice a week for an hour's interview with her therapist. Occasionally there were interviews that lasted throughout the whole afternoon. With the permission of both ladies, tape recordings were made of each as she worked with the doctor. Over many months the attempt was made with each Eve to work back step by step into early childhood. Eve White and Eve Black each took

various psychological tests. Their handwritings were studied and compared by a qualified expert. Though he was considerably impressed by consistent and significant differences between the two, it was his opinion that an expert could establish sufficient evidence to show both were done by the same human hand. Each Eve consented to our making moving pictures. Our first pictures were on silent film but we later obtained a study with sound. By this means they were for the first time, one might say, able to see each other.

Eve Black, because of her access to the other's thought, had, of course, an approximate idea of her alternate. Watching the film with obvious amusement, she commented from time to time when Eve White expressed an opinion or straightened herself in the chair, "Wouldn't she, now!" When the film showed Eve White get up and walk across the room, the disdainful observer murmured, "Mincing!"

Eve White, on the other hand, studied the film with solemn gravity. When it ended, embarrassment showed in the faint pink spots on her cheeks, in the withdrawal of her eyes. She sat silent for a few moments as if seeking her customary outward poise. We had never heard Eve White speak unkindly of another. Not in sarcasm, but humbly and in the truest spirit of charity, she at last found herself able to say in a low serious voice, "I suppose . . . I mean one could say there's a lot about her that seems fresh and . . . really . . . very attractive. She does seem so young."

The Rorschach test, in which the patient tells what he sees in ten standardized ink blots, as well as other projective tests, revealed nothing important about either Eve White or Eve Black that was not already known. It is, however, interesting to note that the Rorschach record of Miss Black was interpreted by the clinical psychologist as "by far healthier than the one of Mrs. White." On the Wechsler-Bellevue intelligence scale Mrs. White's I.Q. was estimated as six points higher than that of her alternate. Of each, however, the psychologist reported:

There is evidence that the native intellectual endowment is well within the bright normal group. . . . In Mrs. White's case anxiety and tenseness interfere, in Miss Black's superficiality and slight indifference as to achievement are responsible for the lower score.

These technical tests did not bring us any understanding of how or



why the manifestation called Eve Black had emerged; nor did they help explain how Eve Black had access to Eve White's thoughts and memory while Eve White remained unconscious of the other's entire experience.

With deepening emotional relations between the patient and physician and with repetition, the process of summoning the absent personality had progressively become simpler. Relatively early in the course of treatment an effort had been made to promote some sort of blending by calling out both personalities at once. These attempts had caused headaches and emotional distress, and were abandoned.

During the many months of observation each Eve, with remarkable consistency, played her own role. No mingling or blending of their characteristic traits was even momentarily observed. In fact, differences between the two manifestations became more impressive as the months passed.

Eve White, according to her employers, was able and industrious at her job; serious, and unfailingly courteous, she made an excellent impression. During her interviews with the doctor she tried to veil her fear and the sorrow that she endured in the separation from her beloved daughter.

The routine of her days was seldom varied. During working hours she kept her mind on the job. She often smiled at jokes that circulated from desk to desk, but never seemed to join in the banter of the others. After work, she spent much of the time in her room. Skilful at needlework, she made all Bonnie's clothes and many of her own. Each day she wrote a letter to Bonnie.

She sometimes took a walk in the little park near the boarding-house, alone or with one of the other girls. At night she often read until bedtime or occasionally played cards with the group downstairs. She attended church regularly, taking an inconspicuous part in its activities. Over this year of close observation Eve White showed no important change. Her new environment, freedom from the routines of house-keeping, the diversions of a city much larger than she had previously lived in seemed to alter her habits and attitudes very little if at all. The little pleasures that came her way she accepted quietly. Evidence of enthusiasm or vigorous initiative was never displayed, though her industry bespoke a deeply felt purpose in providing for her child.

Eve Black, meanwhile, showed little or no real compassion for this

mother's grief in the separation from her child. In talking to us about all matters past and present her emotions were utterly free. She bore the other no ill will. Amusement, saucy vexation, eager anticipation, a fresh, childlike delight in trivialities, fleeting anger, naïve vanity, all flashed in her volatile face.

Efforts to interest Eve Black in helping Eve White with her problems were continually frustrated by the playful Eve's whims. She owned to no attachments, accepted no responsibilities. The doctor was occasionally able to enlist her support in some novel remedial aim directed towards Eve White. Sometimes attaining in her even an attitude of neutrality was of great value. Often by ingenious lies she misled the doctor into believing that she was co-operating when her behaviour was particularly detrimental to Eve White's progress.

One valuable means of influencing her, which had been partially used before, remained. As has been said, sometimes the adventurous Eve could "get out" and sometimes not. Since Eve White had learned of the other's existence, it had become plain to us that her willingness to step aside and, so to speak, to release the imp played an important part in her alternate's ability to appear. The therapist now used this fact again for bargaining with Eve Black for better co-operation. When she avoided serious interruptions of Eve White's work and refrained from pranks that caused difficulties, she was rewarded with more time "out."

Despite occasional brief eruptions of her alternate during the hours of work, Eve White held her first job for approximately two months. Perhaps Eve Black was influenced more than she admitted by recognition of the fact that her sober partner must maintain a source of livelihood if she herself were to subsist. Usually the flamboyant one restricted her longer excursions into the outside world to week-ends or to evenings. A couple of weeks after Eve White began her first job, however, Eve Black decided to visit her office. "I just thought I'd like to see for myself what it was like there," she explained to the doctor later with a tranquil smile. Lacking Eve White's skill with the typewriter she soon made a series of mistakes; then, vexed or bored, she awkwardly spelt out the words of a *risqué* joke. Amused at the incongruity of this offering in a serious business report, she tried her hand at filing, leaving a good deal of confusion for the other Eve to deal with.

After that she slipped "out" every now and then in the office. Having

no incentive for work, she seldom interrupted her colleague very long. But even when present for only a few minutes, she sometimes created strange impressions, coming out with some wisecrack that was in astonishing contrast with everyone's concept of the sober Mrs. White.

More rarely, estimating that she would be able to hold the stage for a considerable period of time, she would leave the office to seek a more congenial environment. When this occurred she sometimes offered the excuse of headache, but by no means always. Once Mrs. White was observed to disappear from her post without giving notice. A few hours later the office manager was passing by a cinema. A jovial shout hailed him by name. Though he knew Mrs. White only casually, this bold, vigorous girl, strolling out of the theatre lobby, somehow brought her to his mind. "Glad to see you out getting a little fresh air, boy—might do you good," the astonishing apparition called to him loudly. Her eyes flashed straight into his face for a moment and she gave him a warm smile. Then she turned and was lost in the crowd. The manager wondered if he had lost his senses.

On several subsequent occasions Mrs. White was left with the uncomfortable task of accounting for a peremptory departure. Except for these peculiar episodes, she was so consistent and conscientious that Eve Black's occasional pranks were tolerated by her various employers for a long time before their cumulative effect caused her to lose the jobs. Sometimes Mrs. White herself resigned, after learning by inference of some humiliating exploit of her alternate. It was occasionally necessary for the physician to intercede for her in regard to these difficulties.

During this period of approximately a year she moved several times, finding it less difficult to seek a new boarding-house or a new room-mate than to attempt excuses or explanations. In a rapidly growing metropolitan area inhabited by almost a quarter of a million people, Eve White found it possible to obtain new jobs and to make fresh starts in neighbourhoods far from the scenes she had fled. But again and again she was forced to start anew somewhere else at a minimum salary. Surely this career could not continue indefinitely.

Eve White found herself severely handicapped in establishing simple friendships or in participating in little plans for diversion that other girls at the boarding-house suggested. Even when Eve Black was relatively co-operative and undramatic, her brash voice and impish exuberance

seemed like such a formidable eccentricity that Mrs. White's acquaintances often withdrew in bewilderment.

Thus limited, Eve White dearly cherished what companionship she found available. Having recently moved to a new boarding-house, she often sat on the porch for a while after supper with her landlady and a few older couples. In this little group were an elderly, retired English teacher and his wife who showed her many pleasant little attentions, both seeming aware of the unexpressed sadness in this quiet timid girl.

The former teacher noticed that Eve White occasionally sat reading an anthology of poetry on Sunday afternoons. Subsequently finding himself on the porch with her, he mentioned the book and spoke of his own interest in it. She was at once responsive, and spoke a little to him, in her guarded manner, about the poems she liked best. At her timid request he finally read aloud to her from her favourite volume on several Sunday afternoons.

She had expressed to the doctor her pleasure in finding these two older people and particularly her gratitude and respect for this gentleman who took pains to bring something like understanding into her semi-isolation. When she spoke with regret of a change in his attitude, she as well as the therapist had little difficulty in surmising what must have happened.

Some weeks after denying any knowledge of what might have affected the former teacher's attitude towards Eve White, Eve Black with twinkling eyes told this story.

Having "got out" one evening just before supper she lost no time in getting her own clothes from the cupboard and wriggling into them. Before the mirror she archly lined her eyebrows and put mascara on her lashes. With her own vivid lipstick she made up her mouth. She then decided to take a stroll. Tripping through the front door, she paused at the cordial greeting offered her by the elderly gentleman who rose from his chair. Though she knew about him, she had not, as she put it, been sufficiently interested in his conversations with Eve White to pay much attention to him. Now her childlike vanity was arrested by the attention he plainly offered. Surprise and pleasure grew in his eyes. He assumed at once that his melancholy and demure little friend must have been touched by a happy miracle to be so gaily bedecked.

"Why, dear child," he said, "you look lovely this evening."

Distractable as a kitten, Eve Black came over and sat on the porch

railing near his chair, overbalancing as she did so. "Oops!" she gasped, flashing a playful glance at him as she carelessly smoothed the dress which had flurried about her knees.

After one or two perfunctory remarks her companion fell silent. Then, trying to orient himself, he caught at the memory of his last conversation with Eve White. They had both tried to recall some lines of verse which subsequently had come to him. Now, seeking a path to familiar territory, he said them aloud in his grave, well-trained voice.

With a sweeping roll of her eyes and a soft exclamation of laughter, Eve Black rocked over the banister, clapping her hands together. "Now, Pops, I do think that's right cute." Ready to join in any game, she arched her brows for a moment of concentration. "I know one too! Listen, Pops, I bet you goin' to like it." Then she recited:

*"They call him a lovin' man;
He sure ain't got cold feet.
He can make you warm inside,
And your heart do the boogie beat."*

She swung herself off the porch railing with a brave swirl of ruffles, touched her immobile companion cordially on the shoulder, and was away towards the street. When she reached the pavement, Eve Black turned, waved cordially, and with a smile called out, "Nite-tee—now!"

PERHAPS the reader will grant that we were justified in fearing what might happen to such a creature as Eve Black during her nocturnal adventures about the city. We could conceive of no way to control her directly except by sending Eve White to the State Hospital. As weeks passed and we saw that the venturesome Eve repeatedly extricated herself from crisis after crisis, we began to feel that beneath her naïve recklessness there must exist a real shrewdness, perhaps some reflex pattern of action by which she unfailingly saved herself. It became steadily clearer to us that she was attracted not by sin or depravity but rather by the trappings with which they are so often garnished.

From time to time she would call from some night club, disturbing the therapist's sleep with childlike requests for help in a situation that threatened to become serious. More rarely she called at some late hour on an impulse to share with him a little of the festivity she was enjoying,

or to sing over the telephone a bar or two of some song with which she was enlivening her surroundings.

One day the physician was surprised to find that Eve Black had come to the appointment in Eve White's place. She agreed to co-operate in calling forth her alternate, but maintained that before the interview ended she should be restored to the state in which she had come for the consultation. This was agreed upon and after the interview with Eve White, who also admitted that the arrangement was just, Eve Black was called "out" again and allowed to go her way.

Apart from the basic question of fairness in such a complicated situation, there were other reasons for not interfering with the balance of power these two had worked out between themselves. Should Eve Black be deprived of her period of freedom she might be provoked into extremely rebellious behaviour. There was reason to fear Eve Black's ill will and opposition, whether outwardly expressed in damaging mischief during her freedom, or from within in the ways that had once caused Eve White's headaches and black-outs and contributed to her anxiety.

From this time on it was occasionally the second Eve who came to fill the appointment Eve White had made. In the waiting-room she at once made herself happily at ease. Talkative and irrepressible, she soon engaged everyone in conversation. Though much of her speech consisted of unoriginal slang, her own fresh and superficial feelings bubbled through so gaily that even these words took on an April flavour. Soon our secretary had no doubt as to which Eve to announce.

On one occasion Eve Black attracted particular attention in the waiting-room. It was the eve of St. Valentine's Day and she had taken some pains in decking herself out appropriately. Into her luxuriant dark hair that now hung free at shoulder length, she had woven dozens of small red roses, carefully forming a vivid heart shape, an elaborate and resplendent floral valentine. Her eyes eager and jubilant in anticipation of the applause she was sure would be forthcoming, she took her chair.

The doctor decided it would be inadvisable to call out Eve White and thus inflict upon her this vision of herself. Later, in commenting on how she had felt when she had emerged at home and found herself in this capricious adornment, Eve White said, "Even a woman accustomed to playing parts on the stage wouldn't have gone out in the street looking like that."

AFTER a year of employment Eve White had gained ground in some respects. She was working efficiently in the best position she had yet obtained and had held it for a longer period than usual, despite occasional minor interruptions by Eve Black. An increase in salary and her careful management had enabled her to save a little money. The headaches and black-out spells had not troubled her for many months. She had become a little more hopeful of eventually reaching some acceptable relationship with her husband. Though sadly missing her child, she found some comfort in her successful efforts to provide for her. She had made a few friends in the once strange city.

Meanwhile Eve Black had in general been causing less trouble. Being bored with all regular work, she seldom "came out" any more to indulge in complicating pranks while the breadwinner was on her job. Though in leisure hours she often indulged in boisterous amusement, her demure and conventional counterpart, lacking knowledge of these peccadilloes, was spared humiliation and distress.

At this point Eve White's headaches and black-outs suddenly returned. They grew more severe and more frequent. The other Eve denied having any influence in the new development. She did not experience the headaches, but, surprisingly, seemed now to participate in the black-outs and could give no account of what occurred during them. Apparently a little uneasy about these experiences she said, "I don't know where we go, but go we do." Two or three times the patient was found by her room-mate lying unconscious on the floor. This, so far as we could learn, had not occurred during the previous black-outs. It became difficult for her to work effectively. During interviews she became less accessible, while showing indications of increasing stress. The therapist began to fear again that a psychosis might be impending.

Some time after the return of the headaches and black-outs, a very early recollection of a painful scalding was being discussed with Eve White. As she spoke her eyes closed sleepily. Her words soon ceased; her head dropped back on the chair. After perhaps two minutes, her eyes opened. Blankly but calmly she stared about the room, looking at the furniture and the pictures as if trying methodically to orient herself. Her eyes finally met those of the therapist. Slowly, with immeasurable poise, she said, "Who are you?"

From the first moment it was vividly apparent that this was neither

Eve White nor Eve Black. She did not need to tell us that. Quietly she continued her survey of the surroundings. Her calm face showed neither fright nor bewilderment. After a few minutes the doctor asked, "What is your name?" With no evidence of embarrassment, she replied, "I don't know."

For a while she said nothing more. Then she asked, "How long have I been here?" As the doctor told her briefly what had preceded, she occasionally asked a pertinent question. She had the manner of someone who needs time to absorb each new item of experience. She denied even the slightest knowledge of any such person as Eve White (or Eve Black) and at first appeared to find nothing remarkable in what the physician told her of her relationship to them. Everything, she admitted, was new to her. She denied consciousness of any life or experience prior to the moment she had opened her calm, steady eyes a few minutes ago. After considerable conversation, she was again questioned about her identity, and said, "My name is Jane." Of how she knew this, or why she made such a choice, she could tell nothing.

ONLY in a superficial way could this new woman be described as a compromise between the two Eves. Jane's impressive command of language no more suggested the pinched, laconic reserve of Eve White than the ebullient slang of Eve Black. She looked no more like circumspect Eve White than like that shallow, boisterous scamp, her wilful alternate. Though Jane's eyes never flashed with the vivacity characteristic of Eve Black, they seemed to reflect a disciplined vitality, an ease, and a range of feeling and interest beyond the reach of Eve White. Jane's face had its own alert and thoughtful expression. Unlike Eve White she could laugh, and her smile was fresh and lovely. Just as Eve Black gave the illusory impression of having a more rounded figure than Eve White, so Jane seemed a little taller when she stood, more lightly erect, more capable of command. Her gait and movements were her own, unobtrusively graceful and perfectly feminine. There was far more of woman and of life about her than might be expected from the two Eves with their faults and weaknesses eliminated and all assets combined.

Neither Eve knew for some time that a third manifestation had emerged. From her initial appearance, however, Jane enjoyed access to each of the other's consciousness during its periods of prevalence. Within



a week she had, so to speak, accompanied Eve Black to the dance halls. She had also attended Eve White at work and followed sympathetically this mother's longing thoughts about her daughter; she had appreciated, without sharing personally, her gentle courage and her sense of impending doom. She soon learned a good many details of Eve White's work. This did not bore her as it did Eve Black. And she reported with utter detachment, but with tolerant amusement, various rowdy witticisms and lusty incidents that occurred when Eve Black was out for the evening. "You know, Doctor," she said seriously, "I'm beginning to believe that girl actually has a sort of talent. I haven't had long to observe, but it seems to me that people in night clubs are often bored and worried. Eve Black puts real excitement and hilarity into any little song or bit of horse-play. Soon other people forget their own moods and seem also to be having more fun."

After considerable acquaintance with Jane, the therapist decided to make her existence known to Eve White. Jane agreed to do what she could to convey to the other a sense of her friendly presence. It was decided that she make this effort at the moment when the physician was informing Eve White about her.

Jane was described to Eve White as a capable and intelligent entity, one in whom she might find a powerful and sympathetic ally. In an intangible, brief expansion of awareness, Eve White seemed to obtain some convincing realization of Jane—not as part of her own being, but as a proximate entity, unperceived but for the moment somehow intimate. Before the wonder and astonishment had faded from her pale face, Eve Black burst out suddenly and unbidden.

With a vehement toss of her head she sprang from the chair and strode across the room. With her back to the physician she stood for a moment with a hand on each hip. Turning, she approached him, wrath and indignation on her face.

"What in hell's this all about?" she shouted. "I might've knowed you and she'd cook up somethin' fishy. . . . You and her and all your fine honourable airs!"

The peak of her anger passed quickly and a little of her habitual cajolery returned. "All right now, give me the straight of it," she demanded. "What about this Jane business? I've got the right to know!"

Though she became somewhat mollified as her questions were

answered, it was plain that she disliked the new situation. Eve White was a well-known rival with whom she felt she could cope. This was a stranger whose thought and action lay outside the scope of her awareness.

During the eleven months in which all three carried out their separate careers, Eve Black was never able to displace Jane's consciousness. Jane could not be called out by the therapist nor, as a rule, could she emerge voluntarily when Eve Black was present. (On the one or two occasions when she apparently did accomplish the latter, Eve White may have momentarily replaced Eve Black to provide the means of outlet for Jane.)

Jane soon found herself spontaneously alternating with Eve White, at first without volition or forewarning. A little later she often found it possible to "come out" intentionally. Her knowledge expanded rapidly. Though unable to command the memory of either Eve, she was told of incidents in their past and used this knowledge skilfully to orient herself. Neither the present nor the past experience of either Eve, however, impressed her as belonging to herself.

Despite her unfailing poise, Jane often showed a *naïveté* quite her own. Her reactions suggested that all experience was new and fresh, and even the most commonplace glowed with novelty and charm. Her rapid acquisition of knowledge, however, suggested that beyond or beneath the limits of her awareness lay considerable resources which bit by bit would become more available. Small items of direct experience, like keys to secret doors, seemed to give her access to additional material.

Though at first George Washington's name held no significance for her, a few sentences of information about him brought within her grasp a good deal more about the American Revolution and its chief figures than had been told her. In some respects she seemed like a person who fifteen years ago at college had mastered Latin but since that time had never thought of it. Such a person, if called upon, could reacquire the lost knowledge with facility.

Much of Jane's information seemed to emerge from resources not available to either Eve. Her interests, viewpoints, tastes, all consistently indicated a being whose experience remained apart. On her first appearance expectation naturally arose that in Jane there might be some fusion of, or even a mere compromise between, the two Eves. But it immediately became difficult to fit her into such a concept. She appeared to us with increasing clarity to be another entity. She co-operated with warmth,

judgment and originality beyond that of the others. All her behaviour was constructive and socially acceptable. In contrast with Eve White she displayed ingenuity, humour and confidence. In her active co-operation she often wrote down comments on the situation and sent them to the doctor. A few months after her first manifestation, Jane, emerging on Christmas Day when Eve White was at the home of her parents, set down these reflections.

MY FIRST CHRISTMAS

I think I have missed much, not having had a childhood period. Bonnie Baby is a very happy little girl today and is so fortunate to have a mother like Eve White who devotes her all to the happiness of one little person. Her baby must never know the sorrow and insecurity suffered by her wonderful mother. I know I could not be big enough to give so much so freely to a family that had neglected me as she must have been neglected as a child. This has caused her to develop an illness from which she may never recover.

Her eagerness to offer gifts to those she loves brings a reward: a joy and happiness to her in knowing they are pleased. They, perhaps for the first time, have given serious thought to buying gifts for her. I wonder if they have ever done this before. I doubt it, because she cried so humbly this morning. Has no one ever loved her, or deeply cared if she was happy? It takes so little to make her happy—a smile or a kind word from either of her parents.

I feel depressed and unhappy. I don't know how to live. I understand almost nothing of the meaning of love and security. I know I must have both to be happy. I have little idea yet of my purpose, of what I may be searching for. I can never feel satisfied, for there seems to be some further point, some goal . . . where?

Jane, who at first had felt herself personally free from Eve White's responsibilities and attachments, steadily developed an affection and compassion for the industrious and devoted mother. She soon took over many of Eve White's tasks at work and at home in efforts to relieve and assist her. Her feelings towards Eve's little girl appeared to be those of a wise and richly compassionate woman towards the child of a family not her own, complicated by the deep conviction that she must not in any way come between the distressed mother and her only child. During the first few months of her separate existence Jane became stronger and more active. As time passed she stayed "out" more and more.

Almost any observer would, we thought now, find it obvious that, if

Jane could remain in full possession of that integrated human functioning we call *personality*, our patient would probably regain full health, eventually adjust satisfactorily, perhaps at a distinctly superior level, and find her way to a happy life. It would have been easy to say that the only rational solution to this astonishing problem was for Jane to survive, and Jane only. But we did not judge ourselves wise enough to make this decision. It is plain that, even if we had this wisdom, the responsibility was not ours. Would any physician order euthanasia for the heedlessly merry and amoral but nevertheless unique Eve Black? Certainly none who had ever felt the inimitable identity of her capricious being.

A surviving Jane, though it seemed very unlikely that she would ever return to Ralph White, would provide for Eve White's half-lost little girl a maternal figure of superb resources. But would her feelings towards the child ever be the unique feelings of deep love that sustained Eve White in her struggle to give the child a chance of happiness? It may be said that Jane *was* the little girl's real mother. The child was, after all, born of her body. But *was* she her mother? Those who had known Eve White would find it hard to accept simple affirmation as the whole truth. This whole truth can be better sensed in direct feeling than conveyed by explanation.

We did not wish to exert pressures arbitrarily and perhaps play a part in the extinction of valuable qualities if they could be integrated into more responsible patterns of behaviour. We believed there was some choice open to the psychiatrist as to which personality he should try to reinforce, but that he must work along with developments within the patient rather than make full and final judgments.

We felt that therapy had played a part in the emergence of Jane, but we did not consider her merely our creation. Our influence seemed to have been more catalytic than causal. We could not predict the outcome with any great confidence, but as Jane continued to grow in influence we became hopeful that some reasonably good adjustment might work out through the capacities she contributed.

Jane, who appeared to have some grasp of this whole matter not available to either of the Eves, shared our sharp reluctance about participating in any act that might contribute to Eve White's extinction. The possibility had occurred to Eve White. Too restrained ordinarily to speak freely about such a matter, after hypnosis she offered, in tones of immeasurable

conviction, to accept this extinction if it might win for Jane the role of mother, in which she felt that she herself had failed Bonnie.

It has been said that a man must first lay down his life if he is to find it. Was it possible, we wondered, that this mother might, through her very renunciation, somehow survive and find a way back to the one and dearest thing she was ready to leave for ever?

At about this time Eve White, anything but a physically bold or instinctively active person, was challenged suddenly by an event which for her was momentous. Of this Jane, deeply moved, wrote to the therapist:

Today she did something that made me know and appreciate her as I had not been able to do before. She must not die yet. There's so much I must know, and so very much I must learn from her. She is the substance of, *This above all, to thine own self be true*. I want her to live—not me!

She saved the life of a little boy today. She darted out in front of a car to pick him up and take him to safety. But the moment his baby arms went round her neck, he became her baby—and she continued to walk down the street carrying him in her arms.

I have never been thus affected by anything in my four months of life. There seemed only one solution to prevent her possible arrest for kidnapping. That was for me to come out and find the child's mother. Eve White had her baby again for a short while this afternoon; and I'm so happy for that.

I still can't feel Eve Black. I can't believe she's just given up. *I feel inexpressibly humble.*

AFTER approximately seven months of experience with Jane and more than a year and a half with the two Eves, we prepared our report of this case for the American Psychiatric Association meeting, and also a longer article, published later in the *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*.

Some who read our report no doubt concluded that we had been thoroughly hoodwinked by a skilful actress. It seems possible that such an actress after assiduous study and long training might indeed master three such roles and play them in a way that would defy detection for an hour, perhaps for several hours. But could any person consciously dissimulating over a period of months avoid even one tell-tale error or imperfection. Others may have asked if we were not being taken in by what was no more than superficial hysterical tomfoolery. Or could not such a presumed disintegration into three manifestations of personality be regarded as schizophrenic? Even if the process was akin to schizophrenia,

it must still be noted that not one of the three personalities showed any symptoms suggesting the presence of that disorder.

It seemed of some importance to us to learn how other observers would react to what we had so long been studying. All three of the ladies agreed readily to appear before the Dugas Journal Club, a group of approximately forty physicians, psychologists, physiologists and chemists from the Medical College of Georgia, the University Hospital and the local Veterans Administration Psychiatric Hospital. Eve White was presented first. When Eve Black was produced an audible intake of the breath brought this group to rapt attention. Jane was presented last.

For approximately two hours the three ladies answered questions, each displaying the characteristics so distinctly her own. In this sober setting of scientific inquiry a sense of drama steadily grew. Not one of the characters could be thrown off balance by any ruse. From none emerged a word or gesture inconsistent with her separate identity. One experienced clinician who asked Jane about an event that had occurred almost a year previously received this reply, "But, Doctor, you forget that I am only seven months old!"

Another questioned Eve Black about Eve White's reactions, implying they must after all be her own. When this was denied he said, "But surely you share some of her feelings. You are, in a sense, twins, aren't you?" With a quick snap of her eyes, she replied emphatically, "But not identical twins."

SOME WEEKS after Jane emerged electro-encephalographic studies of the three patients had been conducted. An electro-encephalograph, often used in the diagnosis of brain disorders, is an instrument for recording minute changes in the electrical activity of the brain. In summing up, the report said:

. . . The greatest amount of tenseness is shown by Eve Black; Eve White is next and Jane least. . . Eve Black's record also shows evidence of restlessness and muscle tension. Eve Black's tracing is definitely distinguished from the other two and could be classified as borderline normal. Eve White's tracing probably cannot be distinguished from Jane's; both are clearly normal.

Now our three personality manifestations were each for the first time given the semantic differential test, a relatively new exploratory device

suggested to us by Dr. J. McV. Hunt, editor of the *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*. Charles E. Osgood and Zella Luria, who devised this test, carried out the blind analysis of the material we obtained separately from the three personalities. They knew only that they were dealing with a case of triple personality; that the patient was a married woman with a child; that she had a job. We had no direct communication with our co-workers; Osgood and Luria did not know who was treating this patient or in what part of the country she was living until after their results were submitted for publication.

The test contains fifteen significant concepts: LOVE, CHILD, MY DOCTOR, ME, MY JOB, MENTAL SICKNESS, MY MOTHER, PEACE OF MIND, FRAUD, MY SPOUSE, SELF-CONTROL, HATRED, MY FATHER, CONFUSION, SEX. The patient places each of these items in a series of scales indicating judgment between two contrasting evaluations, or opposites, such as *valuable-worthless*, *soft-hard*, *active-passive*, etc. There are ten pairs of these evaluations. Each scale gives seven choices of degree between the two extremes as shown in these examples:

MY FATHER	active	___	:	___	:	___	:	___	:	X	:	___	:	___	:	passive.
MY MOTHER	soft	___	:	X	:	___	:	___	:	___	:	___	:	___	:	hard.

The results of the test led Osgood and Luria, whose report has since been published in the *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, to estimate Jane and Eve White as "socialized" personalities. They differ chiefly from each other in their responses to the concepts ME, MY SPOUSE and SEX. Eve White's reactions suggesting a negative critical attitude, Jane's suggesting acceptance of them as positive values. "Eve Black," they report, "shows gross differences on almost all concepts . . . clearly the most deviant and disordered personality." Her test analysis says in part: "What are positive values for most people—CHILD, MY SPOUSE, MY JOB, LOVE and SEX—are completely rejected as *bad* and *passive*, and all of these except CHILD are also *weak*. . . . LOVE and SEX are closely identified, both as *bad*, *weak*, *passive* things."

Osgood and Luria tentatively infer that, of the three, Eve White is "most in contact with social reality and under the greatest emotional stress." She is described as "accepting the mores or values of others (particularly her mother) but continually criticizing and punishing herself. . . . If this case came to the psychotherapists with a voluntary plea for

help," Osgood and Luria conclude, "then it seems likely that Eve White was dominant at the time."

Eve Black is described as accepting socially disapproved attitudes as "perfectly legitimate," as seeing "herself as a dominant, active wonder-woman" and as "in no way self-critical." Osgood and Luria also say, "Like a completely selfish infant, this personality is entirely oriented round the assumption of its own perfection."

To our surprise, interpretation of the test indicated Jane as "the 'original' personality, in the sense of being most characteristic of the woman her friends and relatives knew. . . ." She also appeared to be "the most puzzling of the three personalities." She is described as "superficially . . . a very healthy personality: 'all's well with the world and I'm getting better and better.'" Some points, however, indicate that through self-deception she may have "woven a web of repression as to the state of reality," that the promising features in her performance may be misleading. Two interpretations of Jane, according to the test, become possible, one offering much hope, the other strongly suggesting that what is most encouraging about her may be quite insubstantial.

If we keep in mind the fact that Osgood and Luria had no information at all about this patient except the few items mentioned above, some of these estimates, based solely on what each of the personalities scored in the test, seem remarkably accurate.

The uncertainty about Jane and her potentialities which the test results bring up is a point of great significance. Would the qualities we have surmised in this manifestation, after all, prove to be little more than a blind mimicry of life? If we were wrong about Jane, the prognosis for our patient became poor indeed.

Here, we had thought, was an ally whose strength might be added to Eve White's apparently dwindling resources. Here too, it seemed to us, were signs of a response to life through which might occur some reconciliation of the conflict between the two Eves. Since Jane had vastly more capacity for fun and humour than Eve White, might not the shallow hedonistic impulses of Eve Black find through Jane more acceptable outlets and more mature goals?

It was still impossible to estimate with any confidence what would next befall our engrossing patient, but her situation did improve for

several months. Eve Black for a while was less ambitious in her exploits. Minor incidents, however, continued to indicate her activity. One morning Eve White telephoned in agitation from the department store where she had been working.

"What's wrong with her?" she sobbed over the telephone. "She goes round telling lie after lie. Doctor, it's so embarrassing I can hardly stand it. She's been telling customers that this and that piece of merchandise will be in the next day when she must know we don't even carry those things. I've tried to believe she isn't really bad—maybe in some respects a nice person—but I don't see how she can be anything but hateful."

Such a loss of patience was not characteristic. Eve White usually succeeded in restraining her tears even when large misfortunes befell her or when tragic events portended. Perhaps the never-ending repetition of annoyances would eventually undermine her remarkable self-control. If this defensive barricade could not be kept intact, would Eve White rapidly deteriorate? Or would she become less constrained and eventually better able to survive?

During this period Jane wrote in her diary:

Eve White seems to think she is slowly dying. She is constantly trying to arrange everything so it will be easier for her successor, whoever that may be. The doctor seems to feel that I will be the successor. If it should be me, I hope the day may come when Eve White will know the fulfilment of her desires, especially for Bonnie, through me. It confuses and depresses me to feel that if I am to live it must be through the "death" of one so fine. We seem to be moving towards a climax, towards something I cannot foresee. Drifting as we are is not building strength. I do not need to say here that I'm frightened. I am scared to death. . . .

CHAPTER 5

EVE WHITE kept her job at the department store until several months after our study of the case was reported, with fictitious names, at a meeting of the American Psychiatric Association. Eve Black took great interest in the newspaper stories that followed this presentation. Indeed, she seemed to be fascinated by her anonymous fame. During her midnight revels she sometimes hinted that she was a woman of renown and, perhaps, a sort of genius, voluntarily disguised in the role of a carefree

girl to avoid recognition. The stories varied with her mood. There is reason to suspect that at least once she convinced a tipsy dancing companion that she had achieved distinction in Seville as a female matador.

Eve White asked permission to leave her work early one afternoon because of a minor physical indisposition. Approximately an hour later the manager of the department store received a telephone call from someone who gave as her name that of a nationally known woman journalist. The manager was asked if Mrs. Eve White was one of his employees. The caller explained that she had come to the city to write an account of Mrs. White. She briefly discussed with the busy executive some points about multiple personality, implying that in some respects at least it was to be regarded as a rare gift.

The attitude of the inquirer soon convinced the department-store manager that he was the victim of a practical joke and he hung up. This, however, led to inquiries about Mrs. White's work. Despite a generally good record of efficiency, her immediate superiors reported that, particularly during recent weeks, she had often seemed listless and unhappy; then again she would be over-confident and careless, chattering boisterously on irrelevant subjects. As time passed these erratic episodes became more troublesome and finally Eve White lost her job.

Eve Black later admitted her part in the proceedings. She had been motivated by criticism of her work by the manager on one of her occasional periods "out." Jane further interpreted the telephone call as Eve Black's means of bringing to the manager's attention the fact that she was a person who had stirred interest in places afar.

Though Jane, with increasing experience, was now able to help Eve White more and more often at work and sometimes to emerge on critical occasions, she had, so far, found no way to bring about any satisfactory compromise between the deeply conflicting aims of Eve White and Eve Black. Sometimes and in some way Eve White was within reach of Jane's wordless counsel or support, but, when Eve Black obtained control, Jane still could not in any way exert an influence either directly or through Eve White.

Some months after the separation Ralph White had become distinctly attentive to his wife, coming often to see her at week-ends and urging her to return to him. She had left him with the understanding that she was to live alone until she had improved sufficiently to confidently

decide to renew their relations. Under Ralph's attempts to woo his wife back her stress and perplexity mounted until it became necessary for the therapist to intervene and re-emphasize to Ralph White the terms of his agreement. Jane, who maintained an impersonal attitude towards Ralph, spoke more freely than Eve White did about the situation. It was her opinion that the wife was increasingly affected by repugnance at the prospect of returning to him. She tried to tell herself, according to Jane, that this was a feature of her illness, something she could hope might eventually subside.

Now, after almost a year of separation, Ralph came to the city apparently determined to take more positive steps. Telling his wife that he was unable to see that *she* had made any progress, or that *they* had made any progress, he strongly urged her to give up her present plans and return with him to Jacksonville, Florida, where he was employed temporarily. Maybe they could soon take Bonnie back to live with them.

Eve White firmly and repeatedly declined. He then asked her to go away with him for the week-end. She continued to shake her head. Finally Ralph became angry and a serious quarrel broke out. After making remarks that led his wife to fear he might take legal steps to gain custody of Bonnie, he returned to his hotel.

Sitting there in disappointment, remorse and intense frustration, he took a highball hoping that this might afford some relief. After about an hour there was a knock at the door. Opening it, he beheld, with astonished eyes, the woman whom he had so recently left in bitterness and sorrow. Or *was* it his wife? Eve Black for a moment tried to pretend that this was so, saying she had changed her mind, but this time she did not deceive Ralph. He made this known to her at once.

"All right," she said, "so what of it? She don't want to go with you, but maybe I do. She don't like you. But . . . well, I'm beginning to think you're right cute." She came nearer and took him by the hand. Except when she was mimicking Eve White to preserve her own secret, Eve Black had always confronted Ralph with scorn and derision. He had never before experienced the gaiety that she so freely dispensed to others. The inviting eyes that turned upon him now, apparently with warmth and excitement, stirred his feelings.

Ralph did not doubt that his wife had a strange and serious psychologic illness. Could this be the improvement everyone had been hoping and

working for? Would it not be wise for them to try being together for a week-end? That was precisely what he had attempted to persuade his wife to do hardly more than an hour ago. Behind the serious hopes that shaped this thought there could scarcely fail to be an exciting appeal in the prospect of spending the week-end with a girl who looked like this and seemed to be in such a mood. The amazing differences between this girl and the woman he had known as his wife must have made him feel, however illogically, that the intimate relations she offered might constitute an act of marital infidelity. Yet he was married to this woman.

Ralph soon found himself urging and coaxing Eve Black to go with him to Jacksonville. Apparently surrendering, then coyly withdrawing, she played with gusto the elusive role of the nymph pursued. Ralph became more confident and expansive in his wooing. The event must be gala: there should be a celebration; he spoke of a corsage. She pointed out that she had at hand only the dress she wore. Why then, he would buy her fitting raiment for the splendid occasion.

Before we learned that our patient had left the city, a picture postcard from Jacksonville brought this news.

Hi Doc!

Having more fun! People believe anything!!!! Did you know I'm the latest thing from the West Coast? I'm singing at the Viennese Petticoat nightly at fifty dollars a night. A bluff will soon wear off so I agreed to sing three nights. See you next week—

Eve B.

The fact that Ralph White had a night job in Jacksonville, Eve Black told us later, had played an important part in tempting her to spend the week-end there with him. She was doubtful if she would have gone through with her scheme to get new clothes had it been necessary to spend the evenings with Ralph. Since he did not get back from work until long after midnight, she devoted the preceding hours to visiting the liveliest spots in and about the city. At one of these places, she claimed to be a professional entertainer who had worked steadily during the last few years in sumptuous cabarets in Los Angeles.

After an audition, the manager decided to offer Eve Black a trial appearance. It is difficult to conceive of a person better fitted to step into such a rôle without preparation. Entirely without self-consciousness, amused by every trifle, she could give even the most banal remark a little

twist of novelty. Though her voice was ordinary, the contagious quality of her own excitement set people humming with her involuntarily on almost any tune. Unabashed and unstudied, she approached even the most forbidding figures with the spontaneity of a cordial puppy. When telling a threadbare anecdote she was able, with a flashing sweep of her eyes, to bring in almost any bystander as if by a personal invitation.

Even if she had had sufficient perseverance to work regularly at such a job, it is unlikely that she could have sustained the effect of those few performances. Once accustomed to her antics, audiences would soon have noticed the mediocrity of her voice and tired of her familiar little jokes and pantomimes. There is little doubt, however, that for those three nights the Viennese Petticoat was indeed a club worth visiting.

Eve White, after several days of complete subjugation, finally regained contact and control in Jacksonville. With no clue to the circumstances until Ralph returned to the apartment, she was numb and helpless with fear. After learning from him enough of the story to orient herself, in a despair more complete than any she had yet experienced, she took the first available train out of Jacksonville and returned alone.

Later in the physician's consulting-room Eve Black denied as emphatically as ever that Ralph was her husband. Not with regret, but with pride, she said she had found in the physical intimacy with him no pleasure but a good deal of petty annoyance. After the new dress, the hat, the shoes and the handbag had been purchased in Jacksonville, she had taken few pains to conceal this. When the physician tried to make Eve Black consider the ethics of her behaviour in this episode, her eyes danced with mischief.

"I got the dress I wanted, didn't I?" she snapped triumphantly.

NOT LONG after the events just mentioned, Eve White made the decision to obtain a divorce from her husband. All doubt and vacillation seemed to have left her. On learning that her husband had taken Eve Black to Jacksonville and spent the week-end with her, she knew that she would never go back to him. Her reactions indicated something even more complex than the hurt of a faithfully conventional wife. They reflected also deep horror in the awareness that her own person had, without her will or knowledge, been used in this peculiarly treacherous affair. Eve Black was delighted with the decision but her reactions

showed that she was very little concerned personally. "If she had good sense, and wasn't so finicky, she'd have got rid of the sorry lout years ago," was one of her comments.

Some time before this a small business transaction involving Eve White and several members of her family had brought to our attention interesting questions concerning her legal status. On our advice she sought the services of a distinguished lawyer. In discussing her case with us her counsel explained that the law of our state does not officially recognize multiple personality, or afford precedent to indicate what should be done if one such identity should object to commitments made by either or both of the others. After being introduced to all three of his clients, our learned consultant suggested that all three of the personalities sign any important legal paper.

Now, without delay, Eve White consulted this lawyer on the divorce. Both Jane and Eve Black in discussions with him agreed to support Eve White and to add their signatures to hers on the legal documents.

A FEW months after Eve White obtained her divorce, Jane reported on a social experience of her own which seemed now to be growing in importance to her. It had begun when the frivolous Eve had gone to a dance and was for the moment unoccupied. Jane in retrospect thus describes the incident:

"May I have this dance?" a good-looking, well-dressed young man asked. It was then that by mere chance I emerged. And for the first time in my life I danced. I did it very poorly, but nevertheless, I had fun the balance of the evening. The handsome, soft-spoken stranger who called himself Earl Lancaster was to bring much happiness into my lonely life.

I had turned a corner. Dr. Thigpen had told me one afternoon in his consulting-room, "Jane, the day will come when you will see things differently. You will want love, a husband, a home and children. You have a lot of feeling somewhere there inside you."

I thought he was wrong. I was sure I would never need any of the things that two people with the same interests want. I thought I was a woman created to live alone.

I remember when I had to tell Earl about my illness. I knew I must. It would not be fair otherwise. After I had told him, I asked him how he felt about going out with me.

"The same as I did before," he said.

That's the kind of person Earl is. We know that if this love of ours

has a happy ending it will indeed be a miracle. We are faced by the fact that Eve White or Eve Black may be the remaining personality, but he is willing to wait and see. Can anyone blame me for wanting to live?

Though much of Jane's diary now reflected her interest in this young man and the new aspects of feeling and living that were opening before her, she also wrote of her growing interest in Eve White's daughter:

She is the first person I loved besides my doctor. For this tiny intelligent child I want to do the things that a mother might do, even though I have never been a mother. Where do I fit into the picture? Sometimes I feel I don't belong in it at all. But then how do I get out of it?

Jane now seemed to think more about experiences that were personal to herself. Earlier she had functioned largely as a commentator on the problems of the two Eves and had been more or less content in this role. She now sometimes spoke of Eve White's work as "our" job rather than "her" job.

Eve White had made good improvement since the divorce. She did not show any evidence of regretting this step. However, a note of resignation increasingly pervaded her writings. Sometimes her attitude seemed plainly that of one who has accepted extinction as inevitable. During this period she wrote:

My greatest worries lie in trying to look ahead to the future for my baby daughter. What hurts me is for her to climb on my knee, touch my face with her tiny hands and ask, "Are you my Mommy or is it one of the others?"

What answer can I give my child?

I only hope that Jane will learn to love her as I do. If so, I will not fear.

I don't mind dying. About my life, there's always been something missing. I don't know what it is; but I don't suppose it matters now.

Though Jane continued to be serene in manner she began to report strange and disturbing feelings and unpleasant experiences entirely novel to her. She now complained of severe headaches, of weird and terrifying nightmares. She repeatedly expressed fear and emphasized increasingly the horror caused by her dreams. Snakes continually appeared, often gruesomely, in the bizarre nocturnal scenes. From the records Jane made, let us quote:

For the last few nights I have dreamed that various parts of my body were turning into snakes. Each night more of me is consumed by reptiles. It's getting hard for me even to try to sleep, because I am afraid. I awaken at night and feel as if all these horrible, unbelievable things are really happening to me. It has taken as long as an hour for me to convince myself my hands and feet were not snakes.

In a dream I was looking through the window into an old deserted hut. In the centre of the room was a snake pit. Lots of men were standing round it. All of them had scaly hands—like snakes. Into the room from a side door came Earl. They took him and threw him in the pit. When he emerged his feet and hands were black and they also looked like snakes. Two nights later I dreamed the same dream, except this time the man forced into the pit was my doctor.

A few weeks later, during an interview in the consulting-room, Jane was discussing a recent trip Eve White had made to her parents' home, where she saw Bonnie. While the mother was playing with her little girl outside the house, Jane emerged. Bonnie now threw a small rubber ball and missed her aim. The ball rolled under the house, which stood relatively high off the ground on pillars. Lattice-work with thick vines partly screened but did not entirely close off the space between floor and ground. An adult, by stooping, could make his way under the beams with little difficulty. Jane thought she would be able to find the ball.

After taking a few steps in the dim light she became sharply aware of the pungent scent given off by earth underneath the house. She felt surprisingly alone, as if she had unintentionally traversed a great distance. Something about this odour seemed curious. Or meaningful? Not finding the ball at once in the obscurity, Jane felt her way slowly past a broken wheelbarrow, a pile of rotting boards, and several empty barrels. Beyond this it was difficult to see at all. As she looked intently, the thought came to her that perhaps Eve White had played in this place as a child and knew every nook and corner of its strange dark expanse. She herself, mused Jane, had never before been under a house. Perhaps it was for this reason that these surroundings pressed upon her senses as something obscurely stirring. Suddenly she seemed to be losing her balance; she was swept by a sensation as if she were drifting free of gravity. Her head felt light. It was not just this place that seemed to change, but something in *her* changed that gave to the whole world an indescribable freshness. Yes, Jane said, it was somewhat like the feelings she had when

she first came to life, or awareness, almost a year earlier in this room. She was frightened, but an illogical exhilaration almost drowned her fear. Then it became clear that she was disproportionately large in her surroundings, a gigantic being. Before this reaction could be fully assimilated there was a quick reversal of orientation. As if looking through the other end of a telescope, she now felt overwhelmed by a realization of her smallness. The floor and the beams still prevented her from standing erect. Her sudden sense of diminutiveness fell against a broader background than the immediate environment.

Jane, unlike the two Eves, had often spoken freely about the incommunicable shades of personal emotion. Though she was immeasurably more articulate than the others, her discourse on such subjects had lacked the depth and specificity of what she now seemed to be trying to convey. In a sense this experience under the house was almost like the filling in of a new dimension.

Now she mentioned a peculiar and unrecognizable familiarity that began to permeate the whole scope of her awareness. There was an inexplicable stillness as if time paused—for how long, one would never know. After a few moments the intensity of her unusual feeling diminished greatly. She found Bonnie's ball and came out into the clear afternoon sunlight. To her surprise, all of what she had experienced so vividly only a minute before had almost vanished. She could remember it, of course; but it seemed much farther away than anything so recent could be.

The doctor asked Jane to seek in her own memory, and in what she knew indirectly of the two Eves, for some event that might suggest a link between her feelings under the house and earlier happenings. She tried, but with no success. Eve White was then summoned to consciousness and questioned, but nothing could be obtained that threw light on what Jane had described.

Later during this interview Eve White was hypnotized and in this state various associations were followed out at length. And then Eve White spoke of a blue cup. She had mentioned this before when she first discussed Flo's china doll. Her voice took on unusual animation and she spontaneously pursued this subject. It was, she felt, in very early childhood that she had been playing with this blue china cup. The cup itself was etched sharp in memory before any surrounding material could be brought into focus. Soon she was absorbed in recalling details of the



scene in which she and her cousin Flo had played with the blue cup.

She was now showing considerable emotion, speaking very rapidly. Someone else seemed to be with her and Flo. No; it seemed now that the presence of this third child was only a bit of fantasy. She herself (how vivid this was becoming) had on a red dress when she and her cousin as small children were playing with the cup. A red corduroy jumper, it was. Now, as if her eyes had magically opened, Eve White announced that this place where they were playing was under the house. Visibly disturbed, she began now to speak almost chaotically. The doctor made out something about chairs . . . a great crowd of people . . . flowers. . . . She fell silent abruptly, as if the zigzag path of association down which she was racing had suddenly ended. A moment later she awoke spontaneously from hypnosis. Then, with a quick shudder of her body, she changed. Eve Black had emerged unbidden and without warning. She said at once that she wanted the therapist to explain what was the purpose of this interview. For the first time there was a note in her tone that suggested seriousness. Then, almost wistfully, she asked, "Doc, do you think we're ever going to get well?"

At last her invincible confidence seemed to waver. When the therapist asked her if she could remember anything about the blue cup, or about Eve White as a young child playing under the house with Flo, she shook her head. "I feel funny," she said slowly. "I don't like this business. I guess . . . I'm scared." She spoke for a moment about the many good times she had enjoyed, then surprisingly said she "didn't seem to have real fun any more." And she complained again of "feeling funny."

If she was indeed sad or serious, there was nothing about her that suggested it was the sadness or seriousness of Eve White, or that she had acquired any of Jane's feeling. If new attitudes were emerging in this hitherto irrepressible female entity, they seemed specifically her own. Though for the moment deprived of her bounce and sparkle, she was in gesture, expression and idiom, as distinctly as ever before, Eve Black.

She now seemed more of a child than ever. Her eyes no longer sparkled with the familiar challenge; but there was still a hint of robust frolic, an afterglow of the full vitality. She smiled, and instead of the inevitable play of coquetry there seemed to be the trace of an affection as warm and simple as that of a puppy. "I was just thinking about the first time I was in this room. . . . You know, Doc, I hardly know how to say it . . .

but you've treated me right good. . . . Remember my red dress?" Here her words became unclear. She began to sob. To the doctor the reality of Eve Black softly, pitifully sobbing was almost unimaginable: tears were not a part of her world. He now felt shaken, disoriented. Eve Black, the capricious, invulnerable symbol of mischief, had, it seemed, somehow found at least a hint of sorrow, a glimpse of the suffering those who are not abstainers from life are bound to discover.

The doctor realized that something extraordinary was going on. She spoke in brief, rapid spurts, in fragments, with intervals of silence. She was looking at him intently with large soft eyes. These eyes, though changed, were no more like the eyes of Eve White or of Jane than when they first opened upon him in the consulting-room more than two years ago. He distinguished phrases now and then. There was something again about the red dress . . . she smiled.

"Oh, Doc," she said very softly, "I feel so funny . . . I—oh, well. . . . Maybe you'll be able to work it out about me. I don't know at all. . . . I want you to have it. Please take it and keep it to remember me by. Only you and I know why I wanted it so bad. . . . Yes, Doc . . . the red dress. . . ." There were a few more unclear words. Then in silence all expression left her face. Her eyes closed. When they opened the doctor found that he was talking with Eve White, who knew nothing at all of what had just occurred. For a few minutes her present situation was discussed. Her parents, she said, had been kinder to her than ever before, and more co-operative, during the months that followed her divorce. The presence of Jane was then requested.

Jane brought out nothing of particular importance. Planning to terminate the interview, the therapist asked her permission to speak again with Eve White, who had come for the interview and whom he meant to restore to consciousness before the patient left.

Jane's neck stiffened abruptly and she gazed blankly at the physician. Her features contorted. Staring now in glassy horror past the man who faced her, she suddenly cried out in frantic shattered tones:

"Mother . . . ! Oh, Mother . . . ! Don't make me. . . . Don't. . . . Don't. . . . I can't do it! I can't!"

Seizing her head at the temples with both hands, she began a banshee's scream that did not reach its eerie and piercing crescendo until the amazed physician had reached the room of his colleague across the hall.

CHAPTER 6

IT WAS a remarkable scream. Wordless, primitive, sustained, it scarcely seemed human. Hurrying back across the hall, we were both in the consulting-room a moment after it subsided. Still quickened by excitement we looked silently at the patient, then at each other.

"Which one is it?" one of us finally asked. After further scrutiny the other replied, "Why . . . it isn't any one of the three. . . . It isn't Jane. It isn't Eve White; and yet, it isn't Eve Black!"

So it seemed to us at that moment, and so it still seems now, more than two years later. We asked her then who she was and she could give no clear reply. Her terror was steadily subsiding but she was still bewildered. After a little while we asked again who she was.

"I'm not sure . . . why, I can't tell," she finally murmured.

We did not press her further at this point for specific information. With her consent we were able to transcribe by tape recorder a verbatim account of what followed. It was soon plain that, in contrast with Jane when she had emerged approximately a year ago, this manifestation was equipped with memory. She knew a great deal about the experiences of Eve White, and also of Jane and Eve Black. This young woman's immediate problem seemed to lie in identifying herself, in discovering and realizing just what and who she was.

It is indeed doubtful if there can be any corner-stone of human consciousness more fundamental than the familiar but inexpressible sense of self. Jane, though without memory of any antecedent life on her initial appearance, had a firm and clear sense of her own identity, unlike the disturbing inner uncertainty now experienced by our patient. As she talked with us, we both felt that this person was like Jane in many respects; still neither of us could quite feel that this *was* Jane. On into the evening many points of great interest to us were discussed.

"When you asked me to let you speak with Eve White," she said, referring to the therapist's last request before the startling scream, "when you asked for her, I suddenly realized, *I am Eve White!*"

It must have been a realization of dismaying intensity. Shaken deep within, there came to her now an opposite realization. "She isn't there. . . . There isn't an Eve White any more. . . . Why, she's gone . . .

gone . . . she's dead . . . no more. . . . They're both gone for ever!"

The sense of death had pressed upon her with sudden and fearful immensity. With this sense there flashed before her the incident from long ago, when she and Flo had been playing under the house with the blue cup. It was *there*, and *then*, that her mother had called her, telling her to come into the house and change her dress. Her grandmother's funeral . . . the lost memory stood forth in almost the freshness of immediate perception. The sad and solemn group of adults . . . the uncanny stillness everywhere . . . the flowers, and the specific odour of those flowers. . . .

Her mother was holding her up high off the floor and telling her she must touch her dead grandmother's face. Appalled, the young child shrank from this demanded contact. Fragmentary ideas of death, heard spoken of during the grandmother's illness, fears that had stirred for the moment and then been evaded by the little girl, all now coalesced. Her mother kept insisting that she must touch this immobile face in the coffin. She burst into tears, squirmed and struggled to pull away. Her mother, embarrassed and unnerved by the conspicuous display, intensified her insistence.

The force upon the young child seemed inexorable. Despite her horror she put her hand against the face of the corpse. When her small warm hand felt the cold flesh of this dead face, recognizable as that of the grandmother she remembered alive, a devastating intimation of mortality shook all her senses. All her old horror of the ditch and of the drowned man who had been dragged from its slimy depths joined her present reaction. The scaly monster which her imagination and that of other children had created as a symbol of death and horror inhabiting those fearful waters became palpably real in the cold touch of her grandmother's corpse.

She had cried out, as her hand moved forward: "No, no . . . ! Oh, no, Mother . . . I can't. . . . Don't make me do it." As her hand left the clammy cheek, all those fragmentary terrors fused into an unbearable reality. It was then that the child had screamed.

Who was it that had screamed again today in the doctor's consulting-room?

It was Jane, despite her lack of ability to recall any early life at all before this, in whom the lost item of experience recurred. Our new

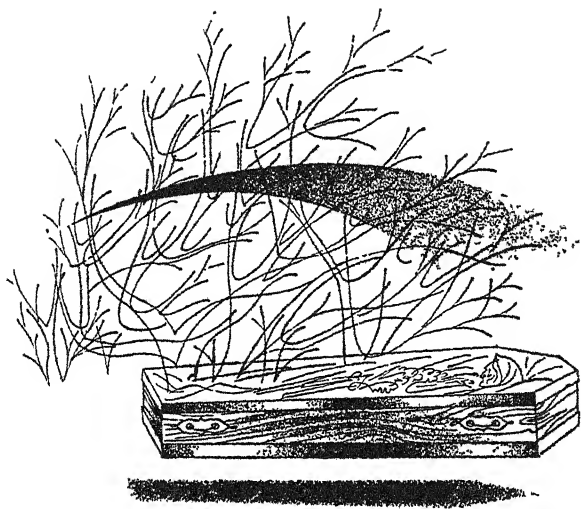
patient was unable to tell us whether or not the realization of it was also experienced simultaneously by the dormant ones, Eve White and Eve Black. In the searing intensity of the moment, a new unit had apparently been welded. What was this unit? It was difficult at this point to estimate. In her background was the great cry of anguish and terror that in a sense marked her birth. A few days later our patient said, "It seems to me I can remember hearing someone scream. After I got home I could not be sure whether it was I or not."

She impressed us as having undergone an experience strange and profound and difficult to communicate. After the terror of the moment subsided, however, she seemed to reflect qualities we had not seen before in any of the three manifestations. We felt a dimensional difference.

*And as I looked a quickening gust
Of wind blew up to me and thrust
Into my face a miracle
Of orchard-breath, and with the smell—
I know not how such things can be!—
I breathed my soul back into me.**

Had she, we wondered, really done something of this sort? Had a great and basic change come about? Or were we merely dealing with another

* From "Renascence" in *Renascence and Other Poems* by Edna St. Vincent Millay. Harper & Brothers. Copyright 1912, 1940 by Edna St. Vincent Millay.



peculiar facet of a patient still as disordered as before? Unlike the three other manifestations, our patient now reacted as if she did not regard herself as altogether separate from the previous personalities. She did not find or seem to seek a new name for herself, as Jane had immediately done a year earlier.

As her initial bewilderment lessened during those first hours, she showed an increasing tendency to identify herself with Jane. The identification did not seem to be sure or complete, nor did she simply reject all the past experiences of the two Eves as alien. Some of these experiences she accepted as her own. Others remained as isolated from her sense of self as they had been to the earlier Jane. After considerable discussion she decided to call herself Mrs. Evelyn White, our original patient's full legal name. Later she reported that she had wept a great part of the day following the dramatic event in the consulting-room.

"I felt lonely, empty," she said.

What was she crying about?

"Eve Black chiefly, I believe. Doctor, I missed her so much. I can't describe it. They just weren't there any more. It made me feel awfully sad. At the time I wasn't missing Eve White. I was just missing Eve Black. . . . I wouldn't have thought anyone could miss her in such a way. . . . I knew something had to happen one way or the other. . . . But then, you're going to miss them, too—aren't you?"

When asked about Bonnie, she said, as if quite surprised, "Why, I feel that she is my own little girl. Before, she was Eve White's child. I loved her, but not the way I do now."

We asked if it were possible for her to think of Eve White and Eve Black as not really lost but in a sense regained. "I don't think so," she said, "at least not now. I feel I have really lost something. Suppose a screen had been put up in front of you. Now for a year you have two sisters. You are aware of them working, playing, living, though all the time the screen hides them. You know where they go and in a sense you go with them, though you are then behind the screen. All of a sudden the screen is not there. And they are nowhere. It is amazing how suddenly it came to me that they weren't there any longer. You can't help being lonely for them. . . . Looking back I have the feeling that Eve Black may have known she would never see you again. . . . When she started crying I began to realize something drastic was happening."

Referring to the last motion pictures made of the three personalities about two weeks before, she said: "Doctor, you almost didn't get your pictures. There was a difference in Eve Black even then, wasn't there? She didn't quite have the buoyance. I am awfully sorry she didn't take that red dress [to Atlanta where the sound films were made]. She seemed very sorry she didn't have it. I told the family it was her request that you have it now. If you want it, I will bring it to you."

"I think you should have it altered," the physician suggested, "so that you can wear it."

"No," she replied. "There is no possible way to redesign it. No woman outside show business could wear it except Eve Black. No other woman would go outside the house with it on."

As SEVERAL weeks passed the new, or different, Evelyn White seemed to become more firmly the new, single personality, solidifying, so to speak, into the specific personal form in which she had found herself after the resolution of the separate entities. The resemblance to Jane persisted but did not increase. Her appearance, her gestures, gait, tone of voice, posture, idiom, tastes and outlook gave the effect of some close relative of Jane's who shared her looks and characteristics. We felt as if this were a more substantial, complete woman than the separate Jane.

She never lapsed into the flagrant manner of Eve Black. Nor did we find in her conduct any indications of capriciousness or irresponsibility. Yet there were moments when her glance sparkled with hints of vitality and mirth more striking than anything of that sort we could remember in Jane alone. She did not lose the earlier determination of Eve White to wait until she was capable of looking after her daughter safely before trying to take the little girl to live with her. In making long-range plans about this she was, however, more active and decisive.

She retained the interest Jane had found in Earl Lancaster. Through Jane this pleasant relation had always impressed us as something with perhaps a bit more of form than of substance. The change in her relations with the young man seemed to us chiefly a conversion of Jane's fanciful attitudes and hopes into something more concrete. There seemed now to be also a more deeply felt appraisal of practical difficulties.

It has been noted that the semantic differential tests run on the three manifestations gave results that suggested Jane as the original

personality, which had become dissociated. The interpretation of the tests derives a particular interest from the fact that it was Jane's consciousness, the one that had never before established contact with memory of childhood, through which the incident at the funeral was suddenly recalled. Does this indicate that our patient, as an infant and young child prior to that experience, was Jane—or chiefly Jane?—or more fundamentally Jane than either of the Eves?

It is interesting to ask ourselves if the child who was terrified by the cold touch of the corpse was actually closer to a small hypothetical Jane than to a small hypothetical Eve White. Could this fright have played a part in such a child's becoming the little girl Eve White remembered herself as being? If the incident alone seems insufficient to account for a personality change, a dissociation, or a deep repression of its memory, might it not have served as a sharp and final stimulus to trigger or set off the effect of deeper and broader conflicts? Could poorly understood fears of parental rejection, childish dreads of death (and of the dead) have mobilized at the funeral and brought into action a great variety of conflicts that had been accumulating perhaps since birth? Insecurities that she had accumulated during the time she was nursing at the breast, when she was struggling with the difficulties of toilet training may have contributed their part. The twin sisters had been born only five or six months before the grandmother died. Possibly Eve at this time felt herself replaced by them.

It is generally believed that a small child's chief problems arise in its relations with parents and brothers and sisters. Eve White pictured her parents as good. Eve Black always expressed distaste for them, particularly for the mother. It seems likely that prior to her grandmother's funeral Eve enjoyed reasonably good relations with her father, but that a good many conflicts occurred between the little girl and her mother, who usually maintained the discipline.

The adult Eve White thought with affection of her younger twin sisters. Eve Black disliked them, and felt no regret in having bitten their toes and otherwise mistreated them. According to the parents Eve appeared to love the twins, but even before the funeral occasionally showed some indications of jealousy.

In connexion with this a point made in the interpretation of the Rorschach and other projective tests is of interest:

... Actually the problem started at a much earlier period of life, with a strong feeling of rejection by her parents, especially after the birth of her twin sisters. Mrs. White loves them dearly; Miss Black despises them. In this connexion an episode is related by Miss Black. After leaving school to help support the family, she (that is to say Mrs. White) sent home money to be used for overcoats for her twin sisters, denying herself a badly wanted wrist-watch. When the money was used to buy them two wrist-watches instead of overcoats, she reacted with strong, but repressed, hostility. Significantly, she removed her wrist-watch while examined as Mrs. White, stating that she doesn't like jewellery.

After the memory of attending her grandmother's funeral had been regained, the patient was able to fill in a good deal of detail. Her mother had insisted that she put her hand to the face of the corpse because of a belief that if one touches a dead person one will grieve less painfully. Behind this there was also a religious feeling that children should be taught not to shrink from death but to see in it the passing of the soul to immortality. The mother saw in this act of gently touching the dead face a test of faith, and perhaps lost sight of how seriously frightened the child had become. The patient's mother herself had already described the incident to us almost two years earlier. The recorded details of the funeral given by the mother coincided well with the memory finally regained by the patient. Both the parents had realized their little girl was acutely upset. They told us that her strange moods and occasional tantrum spells began shortly afterwards. They also remembered that she woke up repeatedly during the night after the funeral, crying out and screaming as if in a wild nightmare.

The parents had told us of so many other happenings that impressed us as deserving careful investigation that the grandmother's funeral seemed only one of numerous major incidents. We found little difficulty in leading our patient to recall through association many of these items. It seemed to us advisable to encourage her to recall all potentially influential material from early life spontaneously rather than to thrust it upon her ourselves. The doctor had frequently tried to lead Eve White, Eve Black and also Jane towards a memory of this experience by bringing up material that might stimulate its recollection.

He had also questioned Eve White about her grandparents and death was, of course, discussed. After inquiries about the maternal grandparents he had asked, "Was your father's mother playful and lively?"

"I'm not sure," Eve White had replied. "I don't seem to remember her well. You see, she died when I was very small."

The incident at the funeral appeared to be deeply forgotten or actively repressed from the awareness of Eve White. No trace of it was ever elicited during similar attempts with Eve Black. Through the bits of the others' memories which Jane continued to accumulate we had searched for some link that might lead to the funeral, but without success.

It is widely believed today that psychiatric illness is often an unsuccessful but purposeful effort towards adaptation, and that it may constitute a sacrifice of the patient's health in order to ensure his survival. Did the small child Eve White suddenly find herself confronted by the terror of death in a particularly devastating form, or in a new degree of intensity, at this funeral? Our patient strongly emphasized the connexion she had felt between the cold, clammy feeling of her dead grandmother's flesh and her fears about the monster she had so long believed to exist in the deep ditch where a man had drowned. The threat and horror of this fantasy, perhaps a symbol of her imperfect concepts of death itself, now came down upon her directly. The mystery and threat of death were a vague but terrible focal point towards which all feelings of guilt and fear seemed to lead. Our patient felt that the huge snakes by which Jane was tormented in her nightmares were, at least in part, reflections of this cruel reptilian phantom of the ditch.

Death to many children seems a form of punishment. In law the ultimate penalty for the wrongdoer is execution. Proverbially, the wages of sin is death. The boy who disobediently scoots out on his bicycle into the swift traffic of the highway may be killed. Many of the rules of conduct that the very young child must first learn are those that will preserve his life. Often physical pain and fright reinforce the verbal warning. As a final and fearful consequence of misbehaviour looms the hideous threat of death itself. This may be conceived by a child as the sum of all imaginable pains and at the same time as irreversible banishment. The child, and indeed the adult also, sometimes evades contemplating or even accepting unbearably distressing eventualities.

If the experience at her grandmother's funeral brought upon five-year-old Eve a new and terrifying reaction to death, it is quite possible that this might have motivated her extraordinary efforts to be good and to avoid what she had been taught was bad or evil. This may have been the

beginning of a pattern of unusual conformity and restraint. Impulses that are regularly denied and subdued may, it seems, gain indirect expression in common psychiatric symptoms, or if sufficiently powerful may shatter the personality in a schizophrenic psychosis.

It has been said also that the banished and blocked tendencies may unite and organize beneath the level of consciousness, eventually becoming the nucleus of another personality. If these concealed forces become strong enough to challenge the conscious personality and to replace it in command, we are dealing with what is said to be *another* and *different personality*. Since we have assumed that the banished or repressed impulses were unacceptable to the formerly dominant consciousness, it will not be surprising if the new personality differs strikingly from the first.

If little Eve, after her grandmother's funeral, set herself to resist many natural impulses, we have a possible progenitor of the restrained, invariably conforming woman who first came to us as a patient. If the tendencies denied expression did, indeed, remain unconscious but alive and gradually organized into a disparate purposive unit, we have a theoretical explanation of the origin of Eve Black. It is so easy to see in her an outlet for Eve White's suppressed feelings that one might say she might have been born for this purpose.

One may, if he likes, and with some justification, think of Jane as the representative of a broader and more balanced human viewpoint. Was she a manifestation of some mere compromise between the two Eves? Or was she the shadowing forth of still other things, once potential in the little child, which could find no secure habitation in either of the two organized extremes? Was the final Evelyn who emerged a combination of all three manifestations?—or, perhaps, some new creation born through their dramatic coalescence but including also elements never conscious or actively operational in any of them as they had appeared to us? We do not know. It would be a gross mistake for us to consider this as an explanation derived from evidence, and a grosser folly to present it as a scientifically established analysis of our patient's disorder. We are merely offering some of our thoughts, some of the items about which we wondered while dealing clinically with the manifestations that often astonished us.

AFTER the synthesis took place we found nothing in our patient that

suggested the presence of Eve Black as an entity. Nothing has occurred since that would lead us to think she may occasionally have emerged to consciousness or to control. We have mentioned that in the new Evelyn there appears to be an energy, a capacity for vivacity and humour that we never saw in Eve White or even in Jane. Jane was not without the qualities these words indicate, but in Evelyn it has often seemed as if some emotional element of Eve Black might be sparkling through patterns of behaviour quite unlike her own.

One may regard this as an indirect expression of a still organized but no longer openly active Eve Black who is, so to speak, imprisoned in the unconscious. On the other hand, one may think of Eve Black as having participated in the synthesis, as having contributed some real elements to the conscious and active personality we now call Evelyn. Perhaps, through a more mature character, the original impulses that we have conceived of as uniting in rebellion long ago against Eve White may find true and appropriate fulfilment. Perhaps, instead of being banished to some lifeless limbo, the charming and childlike vitality of Eve Black may find meaningful consummation, and possibly even make a contribution not unlike a redemption.

ONLY a few days ago we had the pleasure of talking again with Mrs. Evelyn Lancaster. It was a delightful and gratifying experience. We had kept in touch with her by correspondence, but to see her again, almost two years after the integration which had so dramatically occurred, was an experience we had long anticipated.

From the time the manifestations of multiple personality ceased, she had not been seriously troubled by headaches. There had been no black-out spells. The distressing nightmares that had afflicted Jane never recurred. Though we could only hope that further serious dissociations would not occur, she felt all the conviction of certainty that the disparate Eve White and Eve Black and the separate Jane of the past were gone for ever. Her problems in the first months of her new life were not, in the ordinary sense, psychiatric symptoms. She had only the wish and the need to orient herself in a world still in many subtle ways strange and unexplored.

Though much of Eve White's past still seemed not quite her own, she never wavered in the sense of motherhood towards Bonnie. Though

genuinely devoted, she was less desperately absorbed in her little girl than Eve White had been. At the basis of all her planning was a longing to have the child with her. She had seen the reasonableness of her former husband's wish that Bonnie remain with the grandparents until sufficient time had passed for some more reliable estimate to be made of her future health. There was at first some difficulty in her recognizing Eve White's parents as her own. They did not, however, even at first seem entirely foreign to her in this role, as they had to Eve Black and to the original Jane. Gradually she oriented herself to her status as their daughter. She impressed us as being able to recognize and accept in the mother elements that Eve White had reacted to with emotional withdrawal. None of Eve Black's careless scorn appeared in this daughter's feeling towards her parents. Despite certain disagreements she seemed able to regard them both with warmth and respect, as thoroughly deserving of her love.

After the coalescence, she often discussed with us the problems concerning her steadily increasing wish to marry. Earl Lancaster's profession, chemical engineering, would probably require that he move about the United States through the next fifteen or twenty years. Would it be detrimental to Bonnie's chances for happiness if she had to grow up moving from place to place? Our patient had frankly and fully discussed her strange illness with Earl, and he had assured her it made no difference to him. Yet, was it possible for this extraordinary past not to thrust itself somehow into their relations? Lacking some part of the experience most women at her age had acquired, would she be able to fill the role of a wife adequately? She was convinced Earl wanted Bonnie with them, but would he be able to accept this insecure little girl without reservation? These were questions to which reasoning alone could furnish no certain and satisfactory answers.

Almost a year after her divorce, Earl found that he must leave within a week for a distant city. Evelyn's new existence had grown about him as ivy finds its way about a supporting tree. They decided to marry without delay.

Now after almost a year and a half of marriage she sat talking with us. Her voice, her general appearance, her mannerisms and her posture were clearly those of the Evelyn we had first known after the sudden disappearance of Eve White, Eve Black and Jane. When she stood and

walked it was not with quite the stateliness that had so clearly distinguished Jane. She looked in far better health than before, and had in fact gained twelve pounds. This, and her greater animation, lent to her figure and her movements something that recalled a little more definitely than before her marriage Eve Black's exuberant appearance. She was unquestionably a far more attractive woman than we had ever seen her before.

She did not wear stockings when she came back to see us. Neither Eve White nor Jane had complained of any irritation from nylon; but Eve Black, as we have noted, complained that the stockings Eve White put on caused itching. Before the resolution occurred, we had all three personalities tested for allergy to nylon. No objective sensitivity was found in any one of them. But after her marriage Evelyn developed a severe rash, and her local physician found in her a specific allergic sensitivity to nylon.

We had learned from her letters that she and Earl had not immediately reacted according to the old formula by which people are said to marry and, in uncomplicated simplicity, live happily thereafter. Mrs. Lancaster's difficulties seemed to have little or no relation to the old problems of Eve White and Eve Black. They were for the most part reactions to the subtle, scarcely less than magic process through which man and woman either achieve the valid goal of love in marriage or find disillusion in what had seemed so rich and bright a promise.

The emotional closeness that our patient needed to find in her marriage probably cannot ever be obtained ready-made. Apparently it must be developed out of an interaction of lives, out of sorrow, misunderstanding and despair no less than out of pleasure. Perhaps it was necessary that they be suffered in order for the growth of understanding and of love to be possible.

No, Mrs. Lancaster told us, physical love had not been really satisfactory during the first months of the marriage. The change did not occur until a broader change all through their personal relations had come.

"It's something there isn't any way of explaining," Evelyn said. "I suppose I just had to learn something from inside me that you can't get to know in a hurry. And no matter what anybody might do, there's no way for it to come except by growing."

For a year now things had been exactly right for them both. When Earl Lancaster talked with us at the same time, a few days ago, he said that it made him feel very foolish to remember the attitude he had held about many small matters during the first months after the marriage. He felt confident the happiness they had worked out was secure and would now continue.

Bonnie had to come to stay with them a few times when they had been settled for a month or two. After six months she came to remain for two weeks. When the time came for the child to return to her grandparents she seemed more reluctant than before to part with her mother. Earl drove her in the car to the grandparents' home. After her suit-case had been brought into the house and he had stayed a while with Evelyn's mother and father, he said good-bye and went towards the car.

The little girl now, to his astonishment, broke into a run towards him. "Daddy," she cried, "oh, Daddy, I want to go back with you. Please . . . please, Daddy, take me too."

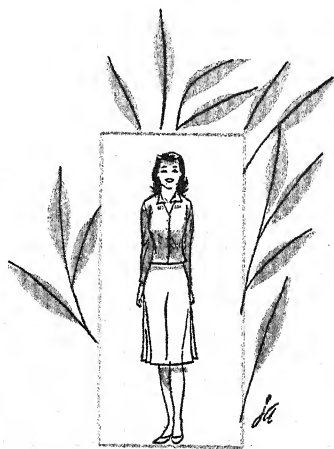
Her feelings impressed the grandparents. They profoundly moved Earl Lancaster. He swept her up in his arms and held her very close. He had not realized until then that she had been able to accept him as he had hoped. Since then Bonnie has remained with her mother and her new father.

After long discussions with the patient and with her husband, separately and together, we felt that, particularly during the past year, she must have made admirable progress. We felt that the happiness she expressed was genuine. We are convinced that she has been able to make a happy life for her husband and her child. Will all this endure?

Three testings with the semantic differential have been made since only one personality remained for observation. The first of these showed changes in keeping with the responses of a normal and healthy person. But one test administered almost a year after marriage was far from encouraging, showing an increasing degree of emotional disorder. Some of the responses on this occasion showed considerable resemblance to those of Eve Black when she was active. Our co-workers point out, however, that "the *concepts* are still placed in the socially approved regions of the space, unlike Eve Black's." The last test was administered at approximately the time of our recent interview with Evelyn. The changes this time, though not conclusive, indicated improvement. There was

nothing, however, that paralleled the encouraging gains reported by Mrs. Lancaster and her husband and which seemed to us so impressive clinically. Is this improvement deep and quite real, or is it more superficial than it seemed to the patient and her husband, and to us? Only time can give us this answer.

Whether or not Evelyn Lancaster will continue to enjoy a happy life we are unable to predict. Whatever may come, there seems to us little doubt that she has already won her way to a remarkable victory against unusual odds. No life lasts for ever. If the integration she somehow achieved breaks and she becomes unable to fill her present role, we shall nevertheless remember that she reached a goal of love and fulfilment that many people, even without the strange and formidable handicaps that beset her, never know. Be it win, lose or draw—can we withhold from her our admiration? Though we cannot predict, we can prayerfully wish her well.





Corbett H. Thigpen

Hervey M. Cleckley

W. B. ALLEN

BOTH OF Eve White's doctors are natives of Georgia, and both are graduates of the Medical College of that State. Dr. Thigpen served two years in the Army Medical Corps, then completed his training under Dr. Cleckley at the University Hospital in Augusta, Georgia, and joined his distinguished colleague in private practice, research and authorship.

Dr. Cleckley graduated with honours from the University of Georgia and spent two years at Oxford as a Rhodes Scholar, taking a degree in physiology. He is a diplomate of the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology, and a fellow of the American College of Physicians and of the American Psychiatric Association. He is the author of *The Mask of Sanity*, a widely acclaimed, definitive book on the psychopathic personality; his numerous articles and essays have appeared in scientific and medical journals, textbooks and popular magazines.



SHARKS AND LITTLE FISH



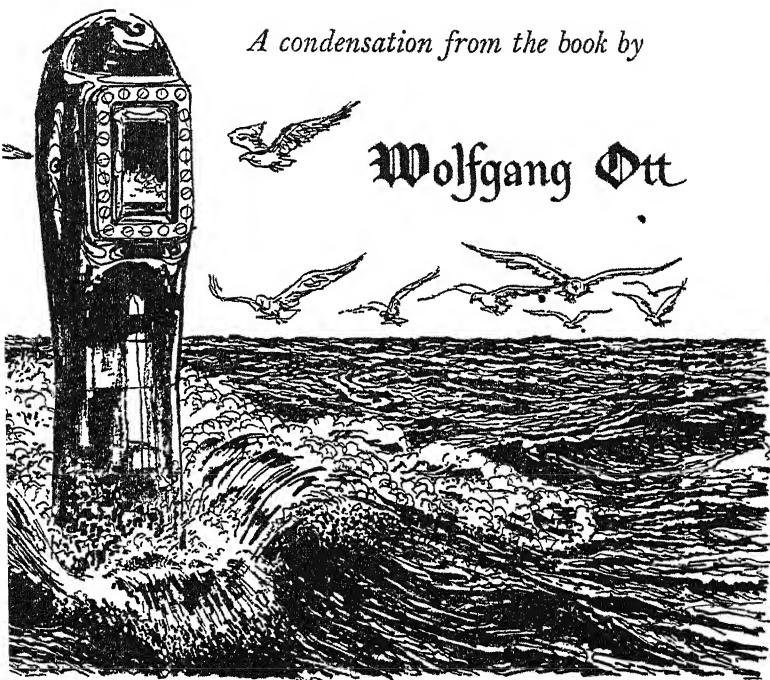
Illustrations by Fred Freeman

Fred Freeman

Sharks and Little Fish

A condensation from the book by

Wolfgang Ott



"Sharks and Little Fish" is published by Hutchinson, London

TO THE great English and American sea novels of the Second World War is now added this powerful story of submarine warfare seen from the German side. *Sharks and Little Fish* conveys the tensions of men driven to the very limit of endurance, fighting their war bravely, remorselessly, regardless of the odds mounting against them.

Young Hans Teichmann, the central figure of the novel, presents an unforgettable picture of the submariner who respects his calling and never fails in loyalty to his comrades—though often he is more in sympathy with the enemy than with the German High Command.

In Germany the book has been described as the *All Quiet on the Western Front* of the last war, and generally hailed as a shattering indictment of modern warfare.

“As uncompromising, vivid and unfalsified an account of wartime naval life as has appeared. In every way, this is a war novel of unusual quality.”

—*The Times Literary Supplement*



CHAPTER 1



U-372 steered a westerly course.

The patrol had started from the German submarine base at La Pallice on the Bay of Biscay, on the west coast of France. It was the first patrol for Midshipmen Teichmann and Stollenberg, who had been passed fit a week before from the Naval College at Flensburg-Murwik.

Teichmann went on watch at 0400. He was a pleasant-faced, broad-shouldered six-footer barely out of his teens. He and Stollenberg had been friends since their school days, and they had seen hard service together in mine-sweeping trawlers before they were sent to the Naval College.

When Teichmann came up on the bridge the Cape Finistère light was flashing on the port quarter. Fifteen minutes later it had vanished. The lights of a few Spanish fishing boats were still to be seen; then they too were gone, and only the gulls remained. They slept on the light swell and seemed incredibly white in the moonlight; from a distance they looked like snowballs.

The men on the bridge were tired and cold, but their eyes were vigilant, trying to penetrate the night that lay before them. Behind them in the east a pale green strip appeared above the horizon, and when the strip took on a yellow tinge First Lieutenant Weissenstein called down the tower-hatch, "First light, sir."

The captain came up. The first lieutenant reported as officer of the watch and indicated course and speed. The captain said nothing. He had the sextant handed up to him, took a star sight and went below again.

Without removing his binoculars from his eyes, Teichmann said to number one, "Is the Old Man always as taciturn as that?"

"Not when he's giving someone a rocket."

Then the sun appeared and suddenly everything was changed. Thin as silk threads, the first tender rays felt their way hesitantly across the horizon. Gradually they took the form of glittering arrows that pierced the night-black clouds and turned them to flame. Then the great fiery ball thrust its upper edge over the horizon. While the heavens blazed and the gulls flew up screaming, the great light rose from out of the sea. The veils of mist that lay on the waters were torn, the ocean appeared to be steaming. The gulls circled the vessel, holding their wings motionless like great eagles. With long plaintive screams they greeted the morning; and there was one that came flying towards the ship, holding its wings rigid longer than the others. . . .

"Full ahead both. Hard aport," cried the first lieutenant.

But it was too late. The bomb had been released. It fell in the water ten yards to starboard. The watch got a good splashing. The British plane vanished.

The captain appeared on the bridge. The first lieutenant reported what had happened. "Swine," said the captain, and no one could tell whether he meant the enemy or the watch. Then he ordered them to submerge.

Lieutenant-Commander Lüttke, the captain, was unpopular, but he *was* a U-boat skipper. He had sunk more than a hundred thousand tons of enemy shipping and was an expert in his field. His men knew that, and although it was their fifth patrol with him and they feared him as on the first day, yet they were secretly proud of him and forgave him most of his faults. They even forgave him when he made them remove the Knight's Cross they had painted on the boat's conning-tower (which was done by all crews whose captain had won the Knight's Cross), telling them, "What's that to do with you? I've never heard of a boat getting the Knight's Cross. Take the thing off at once." Lüttke was like that. But ashore, and when leaving or putting into port, he always wore his medal.

At 0800 Teichmann was relieved. He and Stollenberg had their bunks in the officers' cabin, and there they slept. But they had to spend the rest of their off-watch time and take their meals in the petty officers' mess. The captain wanted it that way. This was not to the liking of the petty officers and it didn't suit Teichmann and Stollenberg at all. They would have liked to remain in the officers' cabin for their meals, because

the galley was nearby; the food for the officers, petty officers and ratings had to pass through there, it was like a sort of customs office. Yet even when it reached the P.O.'s mess, the food was very good. The midshipmen had not eaten so well since they had joined the navy. But that was the only pleasant thing about life on a submarine.

The worst thing was the conning-tower watch. It lasted four hours. During this time they were not allowed to sit or lean on anything or remove the heavy Zeiss binoculars from their eyes. Each of the four look-outs was responsible for a ninety-degree sector of sky, horizon and sea. The top of a mast on the horizon, thin as a pin, had to be reported at once.

The captain expected the midshipmen on their off watch to take charge of the hands at cleaning-stations. This was a crazy idea, the first lieutenant confided to the midshipmen; the ratings were packed like sardines in the forward torpedo-compartment, eating and sleeping on the torpedoes. They had quite enough to do without going to daily cleaning-stations.

The number one stood pretty high with his men. The more rockets the captain gave him—and the captain tended to treat his officers like recruits—the more popular Weissenstein became. He called his men by their first names, although the captain was much annoyed every time he heard him. The familiar tone did the men good, for the first lieutenant was of the nobility—a real prince. The captain addressed him as Weissenstein, though that was only part of his name. His subordinates addressed him as sir, but it sounded as if they meant to say “your Highness.” He was a fine-looking man. He had a well-shaped boyish face, jet-black hair combed straight back, full lips and sparkling teeth. His favourite word was *picobello*. When he liked something, he said, “*Picobello*,” and when he didn't like something, he said, “Not at all *picobello*.” This was the most pronounced disapproval he ever expressed, for he was a very polite man.

On the eleventh day out, shortly before midnight, Stollenberg sighted a tanker, doing at least eighteen knots and zigzagging wildly. It was only the zigzagging that enabled U-372 with her fourteen knots maximum to maintain contact with the target. The submarine ignored the zigzags, and headed on the tanker's mean course.

By 0300 the U-boat had come close to the tanker. Teichmann, who was

then on watch, was amazed that the tanker hadn't spotted them. With his naked eye he could see the whole ship. But they seemed to be asleep; nothing was stirring, and she couldn't be more than six hundred yards away.

The captain had ordered the torpedo tubes to be made ready for surface attack when a low-lying cloud enveloped the target. The attack had to be broken off.

It took an hour to get back into firing position. But by now the wind had risen, there was a rough sea, and this made it impossible to fire a torpedo with any accuracy. Once more the attack was abandoned, and the captain decided to wait for the sea to quiet down.

But the sea did not become calmer. The wind rose to gale force and piled up the long Atlantic swell into vertical walls that descended on the bridge, tearing at the belts with which the watch had made themselves fast. At the approach of a wave the men on the bridge, scarcely nine feet above the surface, lowered their heads, clung to the bridge coaming, and arched their backs like cats in a thunderstorm. At first Teichmann was amused, but not for long. Once he was barely able to hold his breath until the wave had passed over. You had to learn how to breathe on time but not too soon, and hold your breath just long enough. Once, when the boat ran off course and broached to, the sea poured into the open rear of the bridge, hurling the four men overboard. All four dangled helplessly from their safety straps. With great difficulty they clambered back on to the bridge, but immediately another mountain of water fell on them.

By the time Teichmann was relieved, conditions were even worse, nor did they improve all day. At dusk the submarine dived, for the storm had still not abated. U-372 spent the whole night submerged. Thirty fathoms down all was quiet; the storm was imperceptible. Everyone had forgotten about the tanker; she was gone for good.

And then for a long time—for two whole weeks—nothing happened. Together with other U-boats, the ship remained in the field of operations ordered by U-Boat Command. She searched the sea at a snail's pace, and her crew was bored. Daily routine became terribly frustrating because nothing happened; there were not even any planes to be seen. Now and then the sub passed through thick fog. It was like a real pea-souper; from the bridge you couldn't even make out the bow or stern

of the boat. And then suddenly everything changed. One evening the fog lifted and at the same time a convoy was reported.

When Teichmann was awakened at midnight, he heard the engines running at high speed. He drank his coffee in the control-room, curious to see what was happening on the bridge: the engines wouldn't be running so fast just for amusement; oil was scarce.

Teichmann had become reconciled to life on board, even to the watches; you could get used to anything. His chief sorrow now was that Stollenberg was in Essberger's watch—Essberger was the second lieutenant—but there was nothing to be done about it. Two midshipmen could not be on watch at the same time.

While Teichmann was sipping his coffee, Weissenstein told him they ought to meet the convoy in four hours if it kept to its course, and if the U-boat that had made contact had indicated the position correctly.

The convoy must have zigzagged; at 0400 there was no sign of it. It was not until that afternoon at 1400 that they sighted columns of smoke. It was the convoy. A British Sunderland flying boat was circling over the ships. The U-372 was able to keep track of the convoy by means of the plane, without attracting the attention of the escorting destroyers.

When five U-boats had made contact with the convoy, U-Boat Command gave the order to attack. They closed in and attempted to circle round in order to attack from ahead. The plane did not bother them greatly. When it came too close, the captain gave the order to slow down, to reduce the froth of the wake, and that was enough. Everybody seemed to be asleep on the plane.

Lüttke was first to dive for the attack.

Teichmann had his action station in the forward torpedo compartment and looked on as the torpedo-man got the tubes ready. Water was let in and the bow-caps were opened. Teichmann heard ships circling overhead; this he did not take very seriously, supposing it to be a normal part of the game. Even when told it was a destroyer, it struck him as perfectly normal. He could hear only indistinctly what was being said in the control-room. But he heard clearly when the skipper suddenly said, "Depth one hundred and thirty feet," and the engineer said, "Hard dive!" and the captain, "Full ahead both."

The sound of the destroyer's screws came rapidly closer. Then they were directly overhead. The men looked up as if there was something

to see. Teichmann was startled by the terror in their faces. Maybe the situation wasn't so normal after all. He too looked up. Then everyone had to hold fast to keep from sliding; the sub was badly down by the head. The depth-indicator in the forward torpedo-compartment showed one hundred and sixty feet. Somewhere a dish locker had opened; plates fell crashing to the deck; an empty brass coffee-pot rolled as far as the forward bulkhead. "Diving fast," said the engineer. A moment later he said through the intercom, "Lay aft to the bulkheads." Teichmann was sitting near the bulkhead and only had to slip back a little to obey the command. The other men in the bow compartment were sitting on the deck or on the torpedoes. As they all stood up a thunderbolt knocked them off their feet. Teichmann sat paralysed. Everything seemed to collapse inside him; it amazed him to find that he was still able to breathe. He looked through the open watertight doors: the men in the control-room were visibly trembling; they looked blurred as in a fuzzy photograph. The whole boat seemed like a string that had been stretched to the breaking point.

But then suddenly everything was quiet again. No more depth-charges were dropped. A few instrument glasses and light bulbs had been broken in the control-room; otherwise there was no damage. "That was just to put the fear of God into us," Teichmann heard one of the men say. But he had his own ideas on the subject.

The depth-indicator showed two hundred and thirty feet. The torpedo-man and his helpers jumped up and began to close the bow caps. The operation took a minute or two, and while they were working the captain came into the compartment.

"Is this when you decide to close those doors?"

The torpedo-man and his men kept on cranking.

The captain had to repeat the question before the torpedo-man answered, and then two red spots appeared under the captain's cheekbones. He turned round and went back to the control-room. A moment later the first lieutenant said through the intercom, "Attack broken off. Fall out action stations." The engineer brought the boat to one hundred and eighty feet.

A few explosions were heard in the distance. Later the man at the sound-detection gear reported sounds of breaking bulkheads as in sinking ships. The cook called forward, "Come and get it," and the captain

ordered the crew to dinner. There was nothing more to be heard of the convoy.

At table Teichmann asked Eckhardt, the coxswain, why the attack had been called off. At first Eckhardt said nothing, then he grumbled, "What a question! Because the bow-caps were still open at two hundred and thirty feet, of course."

The captain called through the open ward-room door, "Send me the torpedo-man."

The torpedo-man was a quiet, well-balanced man with five patrols behind him. But when he went into the ward-room he was as white as a sheet.

"Do you know why the bow-caps have to be closed when the boat goes below one hundred feet?" the captain asked.

"Yes, sir."

"Why?"

"Because the steering mechanism of the torpedoes must not be exposed to higher water pressure, or it won't steer the course that has been set. But, sir, it was impossible for me to . . ."

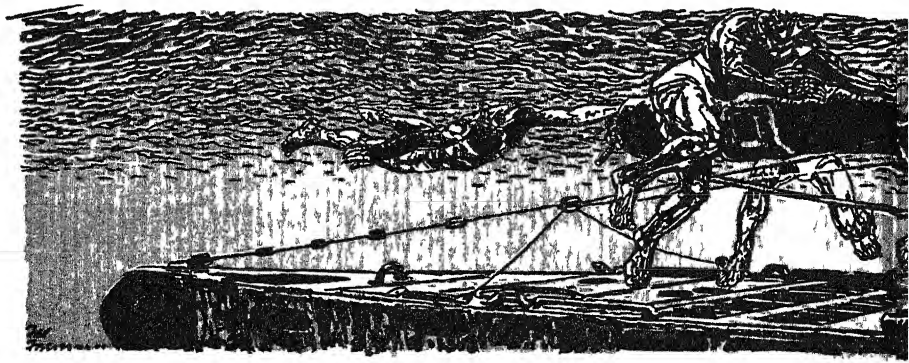
The captain interrupted. "I did not ask you why the doors were not closed. I asked you if you knew why they should be closed, and that you have already told me. You will report to me at nine o'clock tomorrow morning for punishment. Dismissed."

"The swine," said the coxswain after dinner when the captain was out of hearing. "The whole thing was the Old Man's own fault. He should have given the order to close those doors. And the number one could have thought of it too. He's torpedo officer. So what happened? The lowest rank gets it in the neck."

The four torpedoes in the tubes had to be removed. Everything possible was taken out of the forward torpedo-compartment, but there still wasn't space enough. The captain ordered two torpedoes to be fired from their tubes. When these tubes were reloaded, there was then room enough to unload and adjust the other two torpedoes.

When the sub surfaced the following morning, the convoy, or what was left of it, was so far off that pursuit was hopeless. Reports of the other submarines' successes were piled high in the wireless-room, and these were also mentioned in the war news.

The torpedo-man was given five days' arrest, to be served in port.



THE BOAT waited three weeks for another convoy. When none came, it received orders from U-Boat Command to take on fuel and torpedoes in mid-ocean from a submarine of the IX-D type, which was returning home because of engine trouble.

Fuelling took the better part of one day. The next morning, in preparation for the transfer of torpedoes, U-372 again approached the IX-D. Her captain was apparently a full commander, for Luttké spoke to him very deferentially and even said, "If you please, sir," when he wanted something; in his mouth the words sounded like some foreign language.

The sea was choppy as the sailors stripped and stood on deck ready to take on torpedoes. The captain, the coxswain and a petty officer stood watch on the bridge.

Teichmann, down below, informed Weissenstein that he had seen sharks in the water the day before during refuelling. "I'll be damned," said number one. "Maybe we're in for some excitement. Report that to the Old Man." Teichmann went up to the bridge and reported it to the captain.

"Little fish," said the captain, and ordered the off-watch stokers to stand on deck with Tommy guns and fire if the little fish should feel like biting off somebody's leg. Then he leaned over and told the sailors that if any sharks showed up they should put their heads in the water and yell; that would chase the sharks away, and if it didn't the stokers would shoot at them.

"At the sharks or us?" Stollenberg asked Teichmann.

The captain concluded: "Have you got everything straight?" "Yes,



sir," cried the sailors. Then they jumped overboard and swam the thirty yards to the IX-D. Each of them had a yellow life-jacket but it was not inflated, because you swam better that way. They'd have to come back without the life-jackets anyway.

The men on the IX-D had hauled a torpedo up on deck through the forward hatch. The men from U-372 shoved their life-jackets under the torpedo and blew them up. The hatch was closed, and the captain flooded his forward ballast tanks, submerging the bow. The torpedo floated on the life-jackets. The men from Luttke's boat took it between them, gripping the life-jackets with one hand and swimming with the other.

The wind had shifted. Luttke's boat was to windward; it took them fifteen minutes to make the torpedo fast alongside her. Then they rested for a few minutes on deck. As a sign that the break was over, Luttke flooded his forward ballast tanks; the men lay in the water. They cursed softly, furious that the captain hadn't even seen fit to warn them. When the torpedo was floating over the deck, the tanks were blown out again, the deck emerged from the water, and on top of it lay the torpedo. They lowered it through the hatch into the forward torpedo-compartment.

At midday it was squally, and the wind force increased. The crew were given a cup of soup and no more; the captain said you can't swim with a full stomach, and he was right.

It took them an hour and a half to transfer a second torpedo. Now they had their full complement of twelve torpedoes below and two in reserve. When Weissenstein reported the deck clear for diving, Luttke set a course towards Central America, and the IX-D started for home. "Heil

and victory and good hunting," cried its captain. "Thank you, sir," Lüttke called back.

FOR THREE weeks they combed the Caribbean Sea from Puerto Rico to Trinidad without getting anything in their sights. The whole time the sea looked like a molten mass of lead. The sun was coppery brown and beat down mercilessly, fourteen hours a day, on the four look-outs. The searing heat destroyed every bit of energy, killed every thought, sucked the last drop of life out of the men. The temptation to lower the glasses, to close their weary eyes, to doze, to sleep, to sleep on watch, was almost overpowering. But still they stared through the glasses. Now and then one of them would collapse and have to be let down into the control-room.

Inside the boat it was like a Turkish bath. The average temperature was a hundred and twenty. Hardly anything was eaten. The bread was mouldy, the butter was liquid and rancid. Everyone lived with a dull, throbbing headache. The leather of the bunks was slippery with sweat; the whole boat oozed with sweat—and stank of it. No one could sleep in this miasma and in the heat.

The submarine was a torrid, cigar-shaped prison.

After their watch the stokers smoked a cigarette under the "village chestnut tree," as they called the spot by the periscope. They saw the sky through the open hatch, and this was all they ever saw of it. Enemy planes were frequent, and no one was allowed on the bridge except for the watch and the captain. The temperature was a hundred and fifty in the engine-room.

In the Caribbean the boat dived eleven times when planes were sighted. This was all that happened. Everything else was daily routine, and part of the routine was the disgust that the men felt for one another, the irritability that sent them into frightful rages at the slightest provocation. Somehow they managed to keep from fighting among themselves, and this was no mean accomplishment.

Finally, two hundred and fifty miles south-east of Trinidad they sighted a freighter, and U-372 dived. The captain ordered action stations and had the tubes made ready for a submerged attack. Then he gave the firing data, and Essberger, the second lieutenant, fed the readings into the fire-control instruments. The sounds of the ship's screws could now

be heard by everyone. "Torpedoes ready," Weissenstein reported. The bow-caps were opened, the captain corrected the target position a last time, and said, "Stand by to fire fan salvo." And a moment later, "Fire."

From the forward torpedo-compartment the torpedo-man reported, "Salvo fired, all torpedoes running."

The stop-watches ran—one with the captain in the conning-tower, one with the coxswain in the control-room below, and a third with the torpedo-man in the forward torpedo-compartment. Total silence. The men crouched motionless and listened. It was as though an exciting film had suddenly been stopped in the middle.

When two minutes had passed, the torpedo-man frowned and cast a swift glance at the torpedo tubes as though to convince himself that the torpedoes had really left them. "The captain never misses," he muttered, "and certainly not with a fan salvo."

When two and a half minutes had passed, the men stood up and gathered round the stop-watch, waiting for the explosion. Then simultaneously, and in almost the same quiet, impersonal tone, the torpedo-man in the forward torpedo-compartment and the coxswain in the control-room announced, "Time's up." Three minutes had passed. The men didn't dare to look at one another.

In the conning-tower a heated exchange began between the captain and the second lieutenant. It turned out that Essberger had failed to feed the captain's last corrections to the torpedo firing-data converter so that these final adjustments had not gone into the steering mechanism of the torpedoes.

"Stand by to surface. Gun's crew stand by," said the captain. As soon as the boat broke the surface, the tower hatch was opened and the gun-crew scrambled out. When Teichmann came out on the bridge he heard Essberger report, "Gun ready." Even before the captain gave the command to fire, the freighter let loose. "They must have seen those torpedoes," said Weissenstein.

The enemy's first shots were long. The sub's first shot was short, but not much. "Up four. Salvo," cried Essberger to the gunner. The second shot was long. "Down one. Salvos," Essberger commanded.

His calm was impressive. He had just had a rocket from the captain for his error on the torpedo settings, and now he stood there as calmly as if he were firing at a practice target.

His fourth shot struck the after-deck, only a few yards abaft the superstructure. "Three rounds rapid fire," he called, and a moment later the ship's funnel collapsed.

The freighter was still fighting, but her marksmanship was poor. Her best shots were at least a hundred yards from the sub.

For the submarine crew it was a party, and they would have been quite ready to have the duel go on for hours. At every shot they gave wild whoops of joy. Actually, however, the captain had no business getting into this kind of battle. He kept changing the sub's course, but a single hit might have made her unfit to submerge, and his ship would have been finished. But Essberger was in fine form; he had nothing but his eyes and his binoculars, not even a range-finder, but he scored hit after hit.

"Essberger, finish him off," said the captain. "I'm getting tired of this bang-banging." He sniffed in distaste and examined his finger-nails, which were well manicured and trimmed to a point.

With the twelfth hit Essberger knocked out the freighter's stern gun. Now the ship's only hope lay in flight, but to make a run for it she would have to turn her stern to the sub and her forward gun would be useless.

Dense clouds of smoke went up from the freighter. That meant she was driving her engines and would try to get away. Essberger chalked up seven more hits; the seventh got the boiler. That was the end of the battle. The ship stopped and put out life-boats. A mighty mushroom of smoke lay over her. The submarine ran towards her.

The ship was called *Hudson*, an American vessel of sixteen thousand tons. Her life-boats—there were four of them—were ordered alongside U-372. In one sat the master, rather elderly and visibly unnerved. Lüttke spoke to him in English. Five wounded seamen were taken aboard the submarine for first aid and then transferred back to the boats. The dead—there were three of them—had been left aboard the *Hudson*. The submariners gave the men in the life-boats a few tins of butter and sausage and bread, and a little fresh water. Lüttke showed the American master his position on the chart and indicated the course to Trinidad. The U-boat moved a thousand yards off from the *Hudson* and sank her with a torpedo from the stern tube. Lüttke sent out an English wireless message in the clear, stating the position of the life-boats. Then he dived and headed east.

AT THE END of November U-372 pulled into the underground submarine pen at La Pallice. On the return trip they had sighted two convoys but were too short of fuel oil to risk operation at high speed.

Teichmann and Stollenberg lodged with the crew in the Prien Compound on the outskirts of La Rochelle. The captain and the officers stayed in Schepke House in the city. The captain, the engineer, the second lieutenant, and those married seamen who were not under punishment were the first to go on leave. The vessel was taken into dry dock, and the rest of the crew went on watch. The midshipmen and the coxswain took turns as chief of the watch.

Watch duty, like everything else connected with this dockyard, was a pure horror. The chief of the watch had to spend twenty-four hours in a boat that was half torn apart, but which had lost none of its sickening smell. Day and night the air was filled with the clatter of the riveters, the hissing of acetylene burners, the buzzing of pneumatic drills. Outside lay the twilight gloom of the great concrete pen, beclouded with oil smoke and dust; it was impossible to take a step without stumbling over rails, cables, rolls of wire, or getting in the way of dockyard trains. While on watch you could neither read, nor write, nor sleep. You could only wait in dull discouragement for the twenty-four hours to be over.

When Teichmann and Stollenberg were off watch, they ate lunch in Schepke House, and that they liked. The food was excellent, and they enjoyed the company of the officers—most of them regular naval men, lean, wiry, narrow-hipped, weather-beaten, moving with the easy grace that was peculiar to professional naval officers. They seemed remarkably well balanced, going about their business in a quiet, good-natured way, without waste motion, useless talk or heroics. In the newspapers, in the films and on the radio they were praised, flattered, cheered—but these men seemed to have lost all interest in the newspapers and the radio. Once when a group of them went to a cinema, a submerged submarine was shown in the newsreel. "Bang, bang," came over the sound track, and the commentator explained, "Those were depth-charges." The submariners got up and walked out, wondering what would happen if that audience should be subjected to the noise that a depth-charge really makes when it goes off fifty yards from your sub.

They did not talk about the war. But when it was absolutely unavoidable or when alcohol loosened their tongues, they spoke about *their* war

in humorous and rather ironic terms. By this time two or three out of every ten submarines that put out to sea were failing to come back. They took the losses quietly, without fuss, just as they took the victories. They were the cream of the Navy, and all through the war they bore themselves as such—when success smiled on them and when they had become little more than cattle going to slaughter.

Mail came for the midshipmen. There was a letter addressed to them both from their friend Gerd Heyne. Heyne was the son of a professor at the University of Hamburg. The three had met on mine-sweeping duty in the North Sea, and they had managed to stick together until passing out from the Naval College, when Heyne had been assigned to a different submarine flotilla.

In his letter he related the details of his life in his characteristic sarcastic style. The letter was from Pielau. After his first patrol, he had been sent to Submarine School for special training. His friends took a dim view of what would happen if one of Heyne's letters should fall into the hands of the censors.

Stollenberg undertook to answer Heyne. He liked to write letters. Teichmann watched him as he wrote deliberately in his legible, graceful hand. They sat in their room, opposite each other at the table, Teichmann smoked a cigar and Stollenberg, immersed in his labours, held his cold pipe between his teeth. From time to time he frowned, and ran his fingers through his fair, unruly hair as he pondered what else he could write. When he had hit on something, his blue eyes lit up, and again he bent over his letter. Good old Emil, thought Teichmann as he watched him writing, he is good nature personified. Suddenly he felt such a surge of affection for his friend that he came close to telling him outright what a good fellow he was.

In mid-December the first group came back from leave; the captain and the chief engineer stayed away for Christmas. Teichmann, whose family had never shown much interest in him, decided not to go back to Germany, and Stollenberg said that he wouldn't know what to do at home. After the second wave had gone off on leave, the two of them led a quiet life. They went once to Biarritz and twice to Royan, where they spent Christmas. They drank a good deal; it was all rather dreary, but they got through it pretty well—very well, in fact, for their Christmas celebration went on for three days.

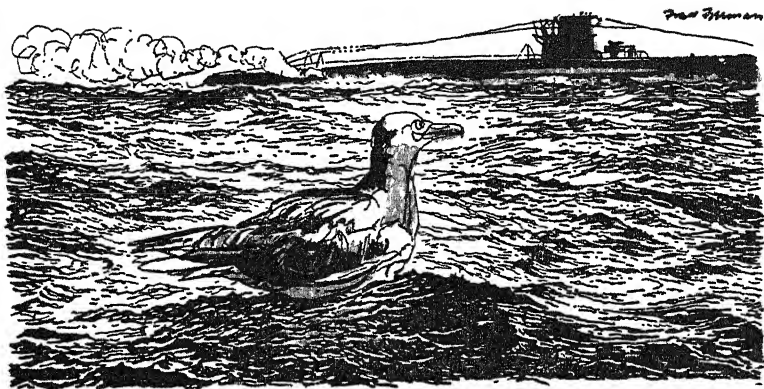
CHAPTER 2

IN MID-JANUARY U-372 put to sea again. The crew was the same except for Essberger, the second lieutenant, who had been transferred to another boat as first lieutenant. Imhof, his replacement, was a reserve officer and the father of several children; it was his first combat patrol.

The farewell ceremonies were as stirring as ever. The night before sailing there was a big drinking party in the barracks mess. Next day the men packed all their private belongings into chests with the required last will and testament on top. Then the chests were locked and sealed and left in the charge of one of the flotilla's administrative staff officers. The crew boarded a bus and rode from the Prien Compound to Schepke House. Here the captain and the officers got in. The bus continued on to La Pallice and stopped outside the submarine bunker. The crew stowed their gear on board and fell in on deck. The chief engineer and the first lieutenant saluted the captain and reported their sections present. The flotilla commander appeared with a large retinue, including newsreel men—"Smile, please!"—and Red Cross nurses who distributed flowers—"The best of luck"—and liaison officers from the Army and the Air Force, and gentlemen from the civil administration—"Fine boys, the lot of them!"—and dock officials whispering, "There's an old tub that won't take many more depth-charges," and officers from other submarines. After the captain had reported, the flotilla commander, standing on the pier, delivered a mercifully brief speech. Then he stepped down to the deck and shook hands with every man in the crew.

He had hardly finished when there was an air-raid warning. That was something you could count on whenever a sub put to sea. It was not very difficult for the French intelligence agents to keep tabs on the movements of the subs: they got their information through the brothels. The arrival or departure of a sub was immediately reflected in the volume of business.

After the all-clear, number one piped his hands to stations, the lines were cast off and the sub backed slowly out of the pen. The flotilla commander and his retinue shouted hurrah, hurrah, hurrah. The men on deck followed suit. Out in the harbour the sub turned. As she was turning, a small launch, caught between the submarine and the pier, was



bashed in and sank. Embarrassed because of the onlookers, the captain blew up the number one. Weissenstein went to the wireless-room and put on the record of "We March Against England." While it blared over the loud-speaker, he came out and, with a completely dead-pan face, announced the first sinking of the expedition. The captain turned as red as a lobster and said that such jokes were entirely out of order.

Twice the men on deck were called to attention, in answer to the salutes of an Italian submarine and of a German torpedo-boat flotilla. Then the sub passed the breakwater and ran out to the rendezvous point in the wake of a patrol boat.

The deck was made ready for diving. There was a nervousness in the voices of the officers as they gave their orders to the men on deck: the Bay of Biscay lay ahead, and it always took a few days to get back into harness. The lines were stowed under the deck and everything movable had to be made fast to avoid the slightest sound of rattling or rubbing when running submerged. Wearing a gaudy sweater and a blue silk scarf bearing his family crest, Lieutenant Prince Weissenstein came down from the bridge and inspected the men's work. He supervised the test firing of the 20-millimetre and the machine-guns. Then the machine-guns were stowed below, the number one said "*Picobello*" to his men, and they climbed down the hatch. He went to the captain and reported, "Deck ready for diving, sir." Shortly afterwards the engineer reported that all was ready below.

At the rendezvous point the escorting patrol boat turned about,

signalling good-bye and good luck, and headed back to port. The submarine ran a few miles on the surface and then submerged.

THE PATROL began well. At dusk five days after putting to sea they sighted a six-thousand-ton freighter, alone but running at gratifyingly low speed. Two hours after the first sighting a torpedo struck the freighter amidships. The ship stopped, but there was no discernible list. The captain ordered Weissenstein to fire a second torpedo. Just then the wireless-room reported that the freighter had sent a message: "SOS torpedoed by German submarine sinking fast"—with an indication of position. The captain gave orders to hold fire. He had no sooner spoken than the freighter rolled over on her port side, lay flat for a few seconds and went down.

In the next three weeks U-372 prowled the icy waters of the North Atlantic waiting for victims, but none came. For weeks the sea swept at storm strength over the look-outs while the bitter wind lashed their faces. The inside of the sub was at water temperature. At midnight and at 0400, when the men coming off watch went down into the control-room, their faces were covered with ice crystals. Their beards froze fast to the collars of their leather jackets; the leather itself had frozen into armour. It took half an hour for them to get feeling back into their hands. Their seaboots were damp on the inside and frozen on the outside, and they would not come off.

It was dismal, but better than the tropic heat. Only once did the sun peer out of the clouds for a while. Teichmann, who was on watch, sent a message to Stollenberg to come up on the bridge with an empty tin can and collect sun-tan. But just as Stollenberg was about to head for the bridge, the captain went up. Lüttke stayed until the sun was gone, and Stollenberg remained below. He stood under the chestnut tree, smoking his pipe. Suddenly the second lieutenant, Imhof, shouted, "Diving stations!"

Teichmann and the two after look-outs dropped down the tower-hatch. Imhof shouted "Flood" even before the control-room had reported ready. He tried to hold on to the hatch cover as he was climbing down, but the cover was no longer secured and it slammed shut. Imhof screamed with pain. His fingers were crushed between the rim of the hatch and the cover. The cover, therefore, could not shut properly; but Imhof could

not get his fingers out. The sub was now bow-heavy and diving steeply.

Stollenberg had seen it all. He was sick with fear, incapable of any thought. In his excitement Imhof had lost his footing on the ladder and was clutching the wheel which secured the hatch with his free hand, supporting his whole weight with his right arm. "Open the hatch," shouted Stollenberg.

The sea was washing over, and water was already coming in through the partly open conning-tower hatch. Stollenberg grabbed Imhof's feet and helped him find a footing on a rung of the ladder. Imhof got his shoulder against the hatch cover and, pushing upward, managed to get his fingers clear of the outer rim. But underneath the hatch cover the thick rings he wore—a wedding ring and a heavy seal ring—caught in the locking mechanism. Stollenberg heard the hatch cover close with a snap, and that was the main thing. But Imhof hung there bewildered, unable to turn the wheel to tighten the hatch cover. Water still poured in, rushing through the conning-tower and splashing on the deck of the control-room. The men in the control-room lost their heads; they thought Imhof still had his fingers in the hatch and that this was what prevented the cover from closing. And they didn't want to drown on account of a couple of fingers. It was dark in the tower; they couldn't see that the cover was closed and that Imhof's finger was merely caught in the catch. One of the control-room men pushed his feet off the ladder, pulled with all his might—and Imhof fell into the control-room.

Stollenberg climbed up and rotated the wheel to tighten the hatch. Imhof lay on the floor. Between the middle finger and the little finger of his left hand, there was a narrow triangular gap.

"I never want to see that damn fool again," said the captain. Imhof didn't hear him; he had lost consciousness.

The sub had gone down to two hundred and sixty feet before the engineer could stop her.

"Kindly bring us back to periscope depth," said the captain. "What did you people take us down for anyway?"

"Because of a plane, sir," said Teichmann.

"Must have been a sea-gull," said the captain.

They carried the second lieutenant to his bunk. He screamed a few times, but in the main he was quiet, because he lost consciousness again.

The telegraphist, who was doctor on board, having once taken a three-day medical course, gave him a tetanus shot, then passed out, because he couldn't stand the sight of blood. The engine-room artificer had to come and bandage Imhof's hand. It gave him pleasure to say "Shut your trap" to the second lieutenant when he groaned. When he had finished, the E.R.A. got a violent rocket from the captain for leaving his submerged station without permission.

At lunch Weissenstein gave a little lecture on the perils of marriage in general and for submariners in particular, or how a wedding ring can endanger the lives of fifty men. If Imhof had not been wearing a wedding ring, he would still be in possession of his ten fingers, whereas in fact things hadn't been at all *picobello*. In the control-room they passed a few further unkind remarks about the second lieutenant, and the incident was closed.

Thus began one of the last battles with convoys before the great U-boat slaughter. For the plane came back, but instead of attacking U-372 it turned away and disappeared below the horizon. Within an hour this happened four times. The second time the plane came quite close. It was a carrier-borne plane. And a carrier at that time meant a convoy was near.

When Teichmann went on watch at 1600, the winter dusk was already falling. The wind had died down; the sea was relatively calm and coal black. Slowly the night rolled out of the east.

The first stars appeared, glittering uncommonly bright, and soon the sky was filled with them. It was bitterly cold.

Then a quivering glow was seen in the north, and the air seemed to crackle with electricity. In places the sea turned dark green. The bow stirred up the phosphorescent plankton as though ploughing a field of golden sand. Almost imperceptibly the hesitant glow in the north turned into a flashing sparkle, and the Northern Lights flared across the heavens like glittering spears.

The telegraphists cursed; the Northern Lights caused bad reception. At 1900 they deciphered a garbled signal from a U-boat reporting a convoy.

The captain came up on the bridge, set a new course, and ordered both diesels to "full." At 2030 a wireless signal came in from U-Boat Command: eight U-boats, including U-372, were directed to make for the convoy at high speed.

At 2310 they sighted a destroyer. The captain ordered the action look-out aloft. It consisted of the first lieutenant, the two midshipmen and a chief petty officer. The coxswain sat over the charts in the control-room, plotting the course.

The destroyer did not see them, and Lüttke was able to keep on his course. Then the black shadows of the convoy appeared on the horizon and their presence was reported to U-Boat Command. Lüttke was ordered to keep contact and direct the other submarines to the convoy.

At 0100 the look-outs sighted a U-boat on the port beam. At the same time the wireless-room announced that two others had made contact with the convoy.

At 0120 a signal came from U-Boat Command: "Attack!"

"Torpedo action stations," said the captain, and the order was passed on over the intercom. The number one went below to the conning-tower.

U-372 ran ahead of the convoy at full speed, for the captain planned to fire on a bearing of forty-five degrees relative to the convoy. Tubes one to five were prepared for surfaced attack.

When he had pulled well ahead of the convoy and had reached a position ten degrees off its course, he reduced speed in order to cut down his wake. Then, slowly, showing the enemy only a narrow silhouette, he stalked towards the leading ships. The Northern Lights prevented his getting very close. Even so, the men on the bridge were puzzled that the enemy failed to see them. Two British destroyers of the latest design were circling round the head of the convoy. One of them came to within five hundred yards, pushing out a great bow-wave of gleaming phosphorescence.

"Destroyer bearing zero, sir," the number one reported up to the captain from his position at the attack periscope.

"Be accurate, if you please. That bearing is five."

Despite the cold, the men were beginning to feel hot. Teichmann and Stollenberg searched their sectors through their glasses, but they had heard the exchange between the captain and the first lieutenant, and in their imagination the destroyer had already come alongside.

"Range still about eight hundred yards, sir," said the first lieutenant.

Now it seemed to the midshipmen that they could hear the destroyer rushing towards them. Teichmann cast a glance towards it and started as though he had been pricked with a red-hot needle. With her lofty

superstructure, the destroyer looked like a small skyscraper, and she was heading straight at him.

"Bearing five; range seven hundred, sir," said the first lieutenant.

"I'm glad you've finally got that bearing right, but your range is inaccurate. It is six hundred yards."

"Aye, aye, sir. Shall we dive?"

"Lord, no. Those fellows are sound asleep."

And so it seemed. The destroyer turned off again and ran back to her convoy.

The bearing slowly widened. When the submarine was still some twelve hundred yards from the starboard column of the convoy, the captain ordered the number one to fire when ready. "And if you miss, I'll throw you overboard," he added.

Two big tankers were observed on the outside of the starboard column. This was unusual; as a rule the most valuable ships were kept in the middle for protection. But then Lüttke discovered an aircraft carrier where the tankers would ordinarily have been. There was no chance of getting at the carrier. He called down to Weissenstein:

"We're going to get the tankers and the two ships behind them."

"Aye aye, sir."

"Aim for the forward edge of the bridge. Amidships too, if you feel like it."

"Aye, aye, sir."

"Have you got a clear view?"

"Yes, sir."

"How many degrees to go?"

"About twenty."

"Good. I'll swing her round. Watch out that they don't go by." And he called down to the quartermaster, "Port ten. Starboard ahead one-third. Port ahead dead slow."

Silently the torpedoes left the tubes.

"Four torpedoes gone, all torpedoes running."

"Make ready tube five," ordered Weissenstein.

"Tube five ready."

"Thank you," said Weissenstein.

"I'm turning off," said the captain. "We've no time for the fifth. And one of those fish costs seventy thousand marks."

U-372 turned off at right angles to the convoy. The quartermaster in the tower was reporting the new course when the first explosion was heard. A column of water shot up from the first tanker. Even before the geyser fell, there was a second explosion, and then at regular intervals the last two torpedoes hit the ships farther astern.

The first tanker exploded, flinging up burning oil like a volcano. The second tanker began to blaze and fell apart like cardboard; her oil spread over the sea and mingled with the first tanker's oil.

For a few seconds all was quiet. Only the oil bubbled and seethed. The men on the bridge could faintly hear the oil blisters bursting dully as they came into contact with the oxygen in the air and caught fire.

And then the fireworks began. The ships shot red flares into the air and their sirens wailed. The destroyers replied with green flares and more wailing of sirens and explored the sea with their searchlights. Now there were three destroyers on hand, signalling one another. Here and there a rocket went up from one of the ships. With the Northern Lights as a backdrop it was a brilliant display.

A few minutes later three or four more detonations were heard from the port side of the convoy. Those would be the other U-boats. Then *bam* at the head of the convoy. Then again to starboard.

The starboard column scattered. One of the destroyers dropped a series of depth-charges. They seemed to have been dropped at random, presumably to keep the submarines at a distance.

The oil spread like a red carpet unrolled by invisible arms, and pursued the fleeing ships. As the carpet overtook a ship, tongues of flame leaped up the side, higher and higher, until the whole vessel was ablaze. Ships rammed each other in their frantic efforts to escape. The air was foul with burning oil and seemed almost sultry.

The men on the bridge of U-372 looked on. They had no need of their binoculars; they could see men in the water, living torches, and now and then they could hear screams. They saw them struggling and splashing, and they could smell the burning flesh.

"Look to port," the captain ordered. "Get your eyes used to the darkness. I will watch the convoy and no one else."

"Aye aye, sir."

But it was impossible to look away from this inferno. The screams rang in their ears. The smell of death crept over the water like a hideous

monster while the flames rose crackling to the sky, a sky studded with innumerable stars glittering with a pale frostiness—as if they were freezing in this icy night in which ships and men were burning like tinder.

Down below the men were in high spirits. The men on the bridge could hear that too, and they knew that the German radio would soon be splitting the air with Liszt fanfares and making a special announcement that so and so many thousand tons of shipping had been sent to the bottom. *Shipping . . .*

Teichmann stared into the water ahead and followed it with his eyes as it dashed along the side, whirling and roaring. He took off one glove and set his hand on the bridge coaming, but the iron was too cold; he was afraid that his skin would stick to it. Now he too felt the cold, and suddenly he was filled with rage. He did not know against whom or how it had come. A cold, inarticulate fury settled within him and ate at his nerves.

When it was over and the rage had died down, he felt empty and lonely, as though he were the only human being at the edge of this sea of flames, as if he alone had set the sea on fire. The loneliness was worse than the fear of death; it was the end of everything. The men below were still jubilant.

"It's horrible," he heard Stollenberg whisper. He had come close to Teichmann and spoken into his ear, and the loneliness was gone. But a dull sadness remained, making him weary and indifferent.

Now there was nothing more to be heard, nothing human was left. There were only the elements raging against each other—fire and water. The sea would win the victory, but it would take a long long time.

U-372 dived. The forward torpedo tubes were reloaded. This was done in the record time of fourteen minutes. Then the boat surfaced again and ran along behind the convoy. Suddenly they saw the destroyer—as if she had sprung up out of the sea. The smoke had concealed her. Now she came racing towards the U-boat, sending up an immense wave.

"Diving stations!" cried Lüttke. The quartermaster sounded the alarm. Sixteen seconds later the boat was under water. The destroyer passed over her, but dropped no depth-charges.

They could distinctly hear detonations from the direction of the convoy. The other U-boats had sunk their teeth in it and were not letting go;

the men in U-372 thought the destroyer would have no time to waste on them but would have to go back to drive the other wolves from the flock. But the destroyer remained nearby.

The captain had the stern tube made ready for a submerged attack. Then he came up to periscope depth. When the destroyer started for the periscope, the captain retracted it, ordered both electric motors "full ahead," and made off at right angles to the destroyer's course. When he reached a bearing of forty degrees relative to the destroyer, he fired.

The torpedo struck forward. The destroyer's bow was blown off, and she began to settle by the head. The bulkheads burst and, still advancing at high speed, she sank. In less than thirty seconds she was gone.

This technique of sinking destroyers was one of Lüttke's dare-devil tricks. Not one in twenty submarine commanders would have attempted it.

Before U-372 had time to surface, a second destroyer was on the scene. Lüttke decided to attack. This time the torpedo instead of running submerged broke to the surface. The destroyer had no difficulty in getting out of the way and in fixing the sub's position.

"Get down to a hundred and thirty feet quickly, full ahead together. All ahead, full. Get down there or she'll ram us." The captain spoke quietly and distinctly as he always did, but faster than usual.

"Lay forward to the bulkheads," cried Meyer, the engineer.

When that failed to depress the bow, he cried, "All hands forward." The men rushed into the forward torpedo-compartment as fast as they could. The bow shot down like a plummet.

"The stern's out of water," said the captain. His voice, not usually very expressive, was a trifle hoarse. He was sitting up at the periscope.

"Diving stations," the engineer called.

The boat dived. The men heard the destroyer coming on fast. The sound swelled and diminished and swelled again like a powerful drill working unevenly. When the destroyer was overhead, the men looked up and began to count. A depth-charge sinks fourteen feet a second.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

The light bulbs shattered; the darkness was complete. The men could feel the trembling of the hull, and it gave them a queasy feeling. They were too frightened to think much.

"Take her down slow to four hundred feet," Teichmann heard the

captain saying. His voice now sounded cool, indifferent and absolutely self-confident. Teichmann was filled with admiration. He knew that if fear got into the captain they were all done for.

The captain switched on his torch and shone it on the depth-indicator. Two hundred and sixty-five feet.

"Shall we pump, sir?" asked the engineer.

"Yes," said the captain.

"Switch on main ballast pump," said Meyer to Schmidt the control-room petty officer.

The emergency light over the charts had come on. Schmidt had put in a new bulb. It was not a strong bulb, and gave only a dim light, so that the control-room was in half-darkness, and the men at the pump behind the gyro-compass remained shadowy figures who worked noiselessly like ghosts. Only the pump made a whirring sound.

U-372 was still sinking. They heard the destroyer coming in again to the attack, and Lüttke ordered a rapid change of course.

Suddenly, when the needle of the depth-indicator stood at three hundred and forty feet, it kicked—four times.

"Engine-room flooding," shouted the E.R.A.

The four depth-charges had been close. They had pushed the stern down, bending the hull like a bow-string. The crash was indescribable. "Chief, go aft and take a look," said the captain. "I'll take the controls till you get back."

"Aye aye, sir."

Only the captain's torch was still burning. The emergency light over the charts had been smashed. The main pump had stopped working. Schmidt was tinkering with it in the darkness.

Meyer came back. "The diesel exhaust is leaking, sir. Just a trickle. We can close it."

"Send me the E.R.A."

The order was passed on to the engine-room. The E.R.A. came in panting. "We can't go much deeper, sir, or . . ."

"Who are you?"

"What?"

"I asked you who you are. Can't you hear me?"

"Engine-room Artificer Hübler reporting, sir."

"Sounds better, eh?"

"Yes, sir."

"If you come up with any more false information, I'll have you court-martialled."

"Yes, sir."

"A ship's court-martial. Half an hour later you'll be feeding the fishes."

"Yes, sir."

"What exactly do you call 'flooding'? An accurate report would be 'slight trickle from diesel exhaust.' Understand?"

"Yes, sir."

"Now get back to the engine-room and stop that leak."

The hydroplane-room reported that the destroyer had stopped.

"I want absolute quiet," said the captain. "If you haven't got anything to do, turn in and go to sleep." He ordered the port motor to be stopped and the starboard motor ahead one third. In the ward-room Imhof began to moan. Aft, the diesel men could be heard working feverishly but very quietly. Then a wrench clattered on the deck-plates.

The engineer muttered an oath. He was thoroughly unnerved.

"Meyer!" said the captain. "You will watch your language."

"I beg your pardon, sir. It just slipped out."

"They call it a *lapsus linguae*, Meyer, old man," said Weissenstein. "It can happen to the best of us." There was something wonderfully refreshing about the use of this Latin tag here at the bottom of the sea in a situation half-way between life and death. Teichmann found himself admiring the first lieutenant more than ever.

The submarine was still going down, although both hydroplanes lay at "hard rise." If the main bilge pump isn't clear soon, we'll go on sinking, thought Teichmann.

Tock.

The men winced as though a whip had struck them in the face.

And then again: *Tock.*

Then it stopped. Teichmann could hear the others breathing.

Tock. And a pause.

Tock, tock, tock.

Silence.

Then a sound like somebody chucking a handful of pebbles against the side. "Destroyer has made asdic contact," said Arndt in the hydroplane-room.

"Correct," said Lüttke, and gave orders to the quartermaster to turn his stern towards the destroyer so as to make it harder for her to get a bearing. But the U-boat was making too little headway and did not react to the rudder.

"Destroyer approaching," said Arndt.

"Let her come," said the captain.

"Bearing one-two-o. Coming in fast," said Arndt.

"Always in a hurry, those tin cans," said the captain. And then he did some quick reckoning: his own course, target course, evasion course—and if he reckoned wrong, he would run right into the depth-charges. The men knew that and kept their eyes on him.

"Hard astarboard, port motor full ahead," said the captain.

The screw sounds grew louder. Suddenly the destroyer was overhead. The sound of her fast-moving screws swelled to a roar. . . .

Wait

Two thunderclaps. But much louder than thunder. Teichmann fell into the potato-locker. He felt rust and flakes of paint down his neck. It's all over, he thought. But it was far from over.

"Destroyer echo getting fainter," said Arndt.

The captain stopped one motor and put the other on "slow ahead." The depth-indicator showed five hundred and thirty feet. The captain switched off his torch. They heard the destroyer slowing down.

The destroyer had stopped. They heard nothing from her now and knew she was looking for them. Lüttke steadied the sub on the last hydroplane bearing. It was deathly still, in the boat and in the sea. •

Perhaps she's lost us, thought Teichmann. He was alone. That night everyone was alone with himself. Nobody saw the others and the others' fear. But it was there. You had to cope with it alone. Teichmann had closed his eyes and was listening into the night. They were now living only by what they could hear. But hearing has no time-sense, and no one could say how long the silence was lasting. And then it was over. They heard something knocking against the boat's side. *Tock*, it went. As when you are lying with your ear on the executioner's block and the axe comes whistling down.

Tock.

• For the first time in his life Teichmann heard a man crying. Maybe Schmidt, he thought. The crying was contagious.

Tock.

And after a few seconds: *Tock*. Then the intervals during which the sound beam missed the steel hull grew shorter. And then came the shower of pebbles. The destroyer's screws began to turn, faster and faster, nearer and louder. The destroyer was coming in; the men in the submarine could hear it all: the destroyer passing overhead, the depth-charges splashing into the sea. And automatically they began to count.

As the destroyer made off at full speed to keep from being torn apart by her own depth-charges, Teichmann was weak with fear. He sat huddled on the deck, his head on his knees, his forearms to his ears, his hands locked over his head. They're set for greater depth, he thought; that's why they're taking longer. But the deeper they explode, the harder the water and the more powerful their effect. Those destroyer people are no beginners.

The destroyer had dropped a ten-charge pattern.

A few of the men screamed. Masses of water had been parted by the detonations and now fell thundering back. The charges had detonated in quick succession over the submarine and pressed her down still deeper.

The captain switched on his torch and shone it on the depth-indicator. The needle stood at the end of the scale. Then he shone the light through the control-room. The beam of light passed over the men's faces. They were standing by the control-room bulkhead. They were holding their escape gear. Some had opened the zipper covers. And they were six hundred and fifty feet below the surface of the sea.

The destroyer made off. The captain shone his torch slowly round. Not till the destroyer had stopped did he switch off. The engineer's voice: "Shall I blow tanks, sir?"

"No." The noise of the blowing tanks would pinpoint the submarine position.

Then Lüttke said: "I don't remember telling anybody to dismiss from diving stations."

Teichmann heard the men getting back to their stations.

"We're still going down," said the engineer.

"Will the main pump be working soon?"

"Can't see what we're doing, sir."

"Get the emergency light on."

"Working on it, sir."

Then a new fear seized them. The hull creaked and groaned under the pressure. They were eerie sounds, sickening sounds. And they never stopped. The pressure hull was nearing the breaking point. The engineer estimated the depth at seven hundred and sixty feet.

The emergency lighting system flashed on; the sounds in the pressure hull grew louder—as though the steel cylinder were being slowly bent out of shape. A report was heard aft, hard and dry as a pistol-shot. Someone screamed and then was still. The cry was followed by a regular loud noise, like the drone of a circular saw gone mad.

The E.R.A. stuck his head through the control-room bulkhead and said, "Leak in the engine-room."

"Teichmann, go and see what's up."

"Aye aye, sir."

Hübler went ahead of Teichmann, lighting the way with his torch. A fine, almost imperceptible jet, as thin and white as the E-string of a violin, passed through the middle of the engine-room. It went from the deck-plates, which had been dented by its impact, right up to the deck-head. On the deck-plates lay a man. Who it was Teichmann could not see. The machinist's mate said it was Carls, one of the stokers. His severed left hand lay beside him. A rivet had sprung from the pressure hull, had gone through his skull and penetrated the deck-plates. As the man fell, his left wrist had passed through the jet of water. It had amputated his hand.

Teichmann went back to the control-room and reported to the captain.

"Can they stop the leak?"

"Not at this depth, sir."

"Request permission to blow tanks," said the engineer.

"No."

Teichmann went back to the chart-table.

"Close the after control-room door," said Lüttke. The watertight door was closed. The men in the diesel and battery rooms were shut in. The stream of water could still be heard in the control-room.

"Meyer," said the captain, "get us up to five hundred feet."

"Request more speed, sir."

"Both motors half ahead."

"Both motors half ahead," the quartermaster repeated.

The engineer had both hydroplanes on "hard rise," but the needle of

the depth-indicator didn't budge. The engineer tapped the indicator, but it still didn't move. "We're not reacting to the hydroplanes, sir," he said.

Tock.

"Both motors slow ahead," said the captain.

Tock.

Pebbles rattled against the side. The destroyer came on, passed overhead, and dropped six depth-charges.

"Sir, she isn't answering to the hydroplanes. . . ."

"I know, Chief."

Silence.

And then again the tapping against the side. The intervals between the taps were longer than before, but more regular. The beam struck every thirty seconds on the dot. The destroyer did not run in to attack; she was taking her time. She held the submarine as a spider holds a fly. The sound beam was her web. It was only a question of time—a little problem in arithmetic: when would the sub's batteries run down? To manœuvre away from depth-charges, you need high speed, and high speed eats up current. Low speeds eat up current too, but more slowly. It could all be worked out. You could also work out when the oxygen in the sub would be used up. The only thing you couldn't work out exactly was when the sub would be crushed by the water-pressure; that was a matter of experience, and no one who had had the experience was ever left to pass the information on. But at a depth of over seven hundred feet, it could happen any minute. Or if the charges were well placed. . . .

After every *tock* the men began to hope that there would not be another. A childish hope. When they had counted to thirty, it came again. The destroyer started a run.

"We'll give it another try," said Lüttke to the engineer.

When the destroyer dropped her charges, Teichmann had a feeling that they weren't so close this time; the emergency lights had not been smashed.

"We're rising," said the engineer.

"Why, Chief, you notice everything," Lüttke said.

"Main pump clear, sir," said Schmidt.

When the depth-indicator showed four hundred feet . . . *Tock. Tock.* Only twice. Then the destroyer was overhead, and as it receded there

were ten detonations. At every explosion the men screamed. They were all desperate. It was worse than the first time. Again it was pitch black all round them.

"Close all doors and hatches," said the captain. "Switch on main pump."

The sound of the water streaming into the engine-room grew louder. The boat was sinking fast.

"The main pump on, sir," came the answer.

Again the needle of the depth-indicator came to a halt at the end of the scale.

"The destroyer has stopped," said Arndt. "New screw sounds farther away, coming closer. Bearing two-two-o."

That was the end. The destroyer had called in reinforcements. Now there were two of them to finish off the U-boat.

"How many revolutions?"

"Can't tell yet, sir."

"We can't hold this depth," said the engineer. "My estimate is eight hundred and twenty-five feet."

The captain took the microphone of the intercom. "All hands: open doors. Gun's crew stand by. We fight until we run out of ammunition." When the seamen are knocked out, the stokers will man the gun."

That was a relief. It was sheer madness to attack two destroyers with one gun, but at that moment no one thought of that.

"Coxswain, stand by to destroy all secret material."

"Aye aye, sir."

"Meyer, blow all tanks. Make the pressure adjustment in good time."

"Aye aye, sir."

"All men with torches to the control-room."

The men passed on the order. The magazine was opened. An intermittent *tock* was heard, and pebbles beat against the side, but no one noticed. That was old stuff. With an immense din, as though to drown the sounds of the destroyer, the men hauled shells into the control-room. Teichmann saw Stollenberg; he saw him consciously for the first time since the first depth-charges. He nodded, and Stollenberg's screwed-up face relaxed into a wry attempt at a grin.

"Number one," said the captain, "you will take Imhof's place as gunnery officer."

"Aye aye, sir."

The destroyer started a run. "We'll wait just for this attack," said Lüttke.

The destroyer was coming on at high speed. The men in the submarine groaned. They wanted to die above water, at the gun, in action, and now they feared that even this death would be denied them. Then there was a *boom*—but the destroyer hadn't reached them yet. Then the sound of cracking bulkheads. The destroyer's screws seemed to have slowed down.

"Sounds of ship sinking," said Arndt.

"Where?"

"Bearing two-four-o. Near us."

"Can you still hear that destroyer's screws?"

"No, sir."

"She can't have sunk herself."

"Sir, I hear screw sounds on bearing two-two-o. Sounds like diesel engines" Arndt could say no more. He was like a small child speechless with joy over an unexpected present.

"Out with it. You know what that means. It means another sub has hit her. Chief, prepare to surface."

Teichmann climbed up on the bridge with the first watch. Starry sky. Cold. Faint, bluish Northern Lights. No sign of the destroyer.

"Hand up the searchlight."

The quartermaster handed it up. Morse contact was established with the other German submarine. A few minutes later the two boats were within calling distance.

"That fellow was making it pretty hot for us," Lüttke shouted.

"That's what it looked like," the other captain replied. "She was so busy she didn't see me coming."

"Did you attack as soon as you saw her?"

"Hell, no. She was good enough to stop dead ahead of my tubes. I don't pick fights with destroyers."

"Well, good hunting."

"Same to you."

Down in the conning-tower little glowing red dots appeared. The men on the off-watch were standing under the "chestnut tree," smoking their cigarettes. They lent a hand when the dead stoker Carls, tied up like a

package, was pulled up through the hatch and thrown overboard. The coxswain made a cross on the chart, wrote in the latitude and longitude, the date and the clock time. "Three hours under depth-charge attack," wrote the captain in the log.

CHAPTER 3

THE BOW-CAP of tube four refused to open. They worked on it in three shifts: Weissenstein and the coxswain; the two midshipmen; the torpedo instructor and another torpedo-man.

The water was like ice. But the stretch across the deck was worse. The first time across the few yards from the tower to the bow the naked men thought the cold would simply kill them. They found it hard to lift their knees, and when they had gone half-way they would just as soon have stopped and let themselves freeze to the ice-covered deck. But on the bridge stood the captain. They felt his eyes on their backs, and the one thing they didn't want was one of his remarks. The eyes were bad enough.

The water was a relief at first; it was warmer than the air. But after a few seconds they felt its full iciness, and they worked with a mounting frenzy. None of them could stand it for more than four minutes. They had a line round their waists, and at one-minute intervals the men on deck gave the line five short jerks, which meant, Are you all right down there? If the diver didn't answer immediately with five jerks on the line, he was pulled out. That was a painful business; the line cut into his flesh, and afterwards, as he worked, it kept scraping the same spot.

The worst part was going back. Panting, shaking with cold, and exhausted, they crossed the deck, but before going below they had to report to the captain and tell him that the cap could still not be opened and why not. In the control-room they were rubbed down until their skin was lobster-red, and they drank their special tot of schnapps. Then it was their turn to start in again.

On their third dive Teichmann and Stollenberg succeeded in opening the cap. A fat dolphin, a good three feet long, had been looking on and immediately stuck his head into the tube. Teichmann smacked him on the tail fin and he shot out of the tube like lightning. It was a comical sight. Teichmann and Stollenberg couldn't help laughing, and they both

got a mouthful of salt water. Stollenberg lost the mouthpiece of his diving mask and had to surface in a hurry.

LÜTTKE was trying to make up for lost time.

"That convoy isn't going to wait for us," he had said, and ordered both engines to full ahead. Other submarines had contact with the convoy and had signalled its position and course.

The wind rose. When Teichmann went up on the bridge that evening the sea was rough, and during the night the storm reached hurricane strength. The look-outs waited for the order to dive. But it didn't come. Instead, the captain appeared on the bridge and shouted to Weissenstein, "We maintain course and speed." He stationed himself by the periscope, and there he remained for the next fifty-two hours.

There was nothing to be seen. Mountainous waves rolled in over the boat, and when the heads of the men emerged from the water, the wind, howling like a thousand organ pipes with stops full out, lashed into their faces as though to tear off their skin. The ship rolled in an eighty-degree arc. The men on watch knew it could not capsize, that the leaden keel would always right it, but they did not know how long they themselves could take the punishment. They were terrified of being crushed or washed overboard. They strapped themselves tight, but they knew that straps can part.

The tower hatch had been closed. The captain and the four men on watch were all alone in their fight with the hurricane. As far as the men were concerned, it was a senseless fight. They cursed their captain as though he were the devil in person. They cursed him out loud, for no one could hear them. Their voices were swallowed up in the howling of the wind and the thunder of the sea.

At the end of three hours, they found there were only four men on the bridge. The disappearance of the after port look-out had gone unnoticed. The captain shouted into Teichmann's ear to take a look down below to see if the man had possibly taken shelter.

When the bridge was clear of water for a moment, Teichmann tore open the hatch cover and climbed down into the conning-tower. The helmsman there looked at him as if he were a ghost. "Get me relieved," he said. "I can't hold a course; the compass needle is driving me crazy."

Teichmann looked into the man's eyes and believed him. Then he went down into the control-room.

"Is the Old Man crazy?" cried Schmidt. His hands over his head, he held fast to the valve controls, and when the boat heaved hard it looked as if he were walking on his hands.

"You ask him."

"The swine. The damned swine. . . ." The last words sounded so shrill that Teichmann turned back, thinking the man had gone mad. But then he saw that Schmidt had only screamed that way because at that moment he was standing more on his hands than on his feet.

At first Teichmann saw nothing on the mess-deck. When his eyes had partly accustomed themselves to the darkness, he picked out details: a boot, a loaf of bread, a sailor lying on his back with his feet up in the air as if he were doing gymnastics. Everything was hurtling from side to side in rhythm with the boat's motion. Some of the straps supporting the bunks had torn and the men didn't know where to stow themselves.

The missing look-out was not in the boat.

On the way back Teichmann looked into the ward-room to see how Stollenberg was doing. He lay awake, wedged in between the wall and the rough-weather slat of his bunk. "How you doing, Emil?"

"Rotten. There's something wrong with me. I feel terrible, and I don't know why." Teichmann had never seen him so dejected. He seemed a stranger, his boyish face grown suddenly old.

"I suppose your stomach isn't used to these crazy capers."

"It isn't my stomach, Hans—I want to tell you something. It's no good what the captain's doing, it's going to end badly. And I know why he's doing it, too. It's because he hates the British. The chief told me. I asked him why the captain is like that and he told me that on his first patrol—it was off Gibraltar—he looked on through the periscope while two British corvettes were shooting down the crew of a damaged German sub that had had to surface. The captain was sick with fury for two days, and he's been like that ever since."

"Things like that happen on both sides. But not often. You mustn't forget that those corvette officers aren't always professional sailors."

"But he ought to dive. In this weather the convoy is going to have to change course anyway. I feel bad, Hans; I can't help it. I tell you frankly, this whole damned war makes me"

"Herr Teichmann, sir. The captain's asking what's become of you."
"I'm coming."

So the man had been washed overboard; that was definite. Teichmann shouted his report in the captain's face. He would have liked to throw more in his face than that.

The weather was unchanged. Teichmann was filled with impotent rage. Why they should be up here on the bridge was more than he could see. The gleam of the foaming sea, snowy and cold, was all that could be seen in this darkness. All right, he thought; in a pinch I can understand why the captain doesn't want to dive. Under water we can do only two or three knots; now we're doing about seven. But why does he need five men on the bridge? Then the relief came; the coxswain, Stollenberg, a petty officer and a leading seaman. The captain stayed where he was.

During that watch the storm raged unabated and another look-out, the petty officer, was lost. In the morning Teichmann's watch returned to the bridge, hungry, frozen and dead tired. It was still dark. The storm was still raging.

By rooo a pale cold light dragged itself over the horizon, and turned the world a dirty grey. The sea was covered with flaky foam, dirty, like a thin gruel. There was something strangely depressing about this dingy light. It sapped your strength and courage until you didn't care whether you lived or died. Towards noon a kind of sun could be made out—a pale yellow disk that sent out no rays.

That night the bedlam of the previous night was repeated, and the next day brought no change: nothing warm to eat or drink, no dry clothing, no rest, and always the bitter cold. Bloody welts formed on the men's necks; the frozen collars of their jackets kept scraping at the same places when they drew in their heads before the onrushing seas and the cutting wind. Their hands had turned into red claws. After their watch, when they tried to take their clothes off, the blood ran out from under their finger-nails, and the salt cut like knives in their open wounds.

On watch once more, Teichmann looked aft and saw that the boat left no visible wake. In doing so his eyes grazed the captain's face—a statue of rough-hewn stone, encrusted with salt, seamed with deep furrows—and he saw two red circles as though some blood had been spattered on the stone.

And then the stone face crumbled. One little question was all it took.

On his way down into the tower, Teichmann turned to the quartermaster, and more from habit than from any real curiosity asked him, "What course are you steering?"

"One-six-o, sir."

"What's that?"

"One-six-o, sir."

"Since when?"

"For the last twenty-four hours."

"I thought the course to the convoy was one-one-six."

"That's news to me, sir."

The course *was* one-one-six.

The captain gave the order to dive. He put no one on report. It had been impossible to read the bridge compass because of the darkness, and in this weather you couldn't read a compass properly anyway, because the needle oscillated fifty degrees in each direction.

For twenty-four hours no one could speak to the captain. His savage, cruel obstinacy—cruel to himself, the crew, his boat—was broken, at least for the moment. The gale had defeated him.

THE SECOND LIEUTENANT, Imhof, was up and about. From time to time he contemplated the gap where his ring-finger had been. Otherwise he seemed all right, except that he had lost a little weight.

They had now been at sea for eleven weeks. At dusk one day they sighted an empty tanker, alone and doing about twelve knots. The ship zigzagged frequently and it took Lüttke four hours to get into position.

Weissenstein fired a spread of three at an unusual angle. Two torpedoes hit. The tanker slowed down but kept on going.

Half an hour later they pumped another torpedo into her. The tanker settled a bit but kept on going, at a speed of five knots.

"Give her one from the stern tube," said Luttke. "Let's finish her off."

The tanker was hit four times and went straight on.

"She must be floating on the air in her empty tanks. We'll deflate her with the gun."

"Aye aye, sir."

Imhof was back on duty as gunnery officer. Stollenberg was a member of the gun-crew.

At the first shot the gun blew up. Imhof's head was torn off by an iron

fragment. Imhof and four men killed in the explosion were thrown overboard. The two wounded survivors, Stollenberg and the coxswain, were let down into the control-room by lines, while the tanker attacked the sub with her two guns, making off at what speed she could as she did so. Lüttke dived.

Stollenberg's right leg was a shapeless mass of flesh; the bone was shattered, the kneecap gone. Weissenstein said the leg would have to be amputated.

They laid him on the table in the petty-officers' mess; it was the longest table in the boat. A tourniquet was applied below the hip; then Weissenstein held the leg fast and Teichmann sawed through the bone. Stollenberg said he felt no pain, that he felt nothing at all, in fact. The number one said that would come later, and placed clamps on the blood vessels. The captain let himself be persuaded to surface for a moment, and they threw Stollenberg's leg overboard and filled three buckets with sea water. They poured the water over the stump. Winkler said there was nothing like sea water for disinfecting wounds. Then they bandaged the stump and carried Stollenberg to a bunk.

The coxswain was beyond help; in two hours he was dead.

Imhof had been to blame. In reporting the gun ready for action he had forgotten the muzzle cap. The muzzle cap was not simply inserted as in land artillery, but screwed into a thread, to keep out the sea water. The shell just hadn't been able to get out, and had exploded inside the barrel.

Stollenberg was delirious for two days. He rambled on about his school days, and when he woke up he was so convulsed with pain that he had to be held. When he was off duty, Teichmann sat beside his bunk, but there wasn't much time because by now they were nine men short, and there were only two watches.

On the third day Stollenberg's fever abated. He was calm and fully conscious. Teichmann brought him food and tried hard to make him eat in order to get his strength back. But Stollenberg would not eat. Teichmann filched the last tin of strawberries from the galley, poured sweet cream over them and ate them before Stollenberg's eyes, but even that didn't make him hungry. He said he'd like to sleep a bit, maybe he'd be able to eat something later. "But there won't be any strawberries; they're all gone," said Teichmann, though the tin was still three-quarters full. "I don't care," said Stollenberg.

Teichmann went to his bunk in the petty-officers' mess. Later on the electrical artificer shook him awake to tell him Stollenberg was dead. Teichmann felt salt water burn his eyes.

ON THE WAY through the Bay of Biscay they had to dive twenty-two times to get away from planes. The return to port took twice as long as planned. They had to wait at a rendezvous point a day and a half for two other U-boats. Then they were escorted into La Pallice by a patrol boat and two mine sweepers.

The flotilla Special Services officer had been busy, and a whole flock of chorus girls were on hand to welcome the returning submarines. They stood in a row, their toes flush with the edge of the pier, and put on their prettiest smiles for the bearded, wide-eyed seamen. A band played, and there were cheering and speeches. The best of all was the ice-cold beer. Each man got a bottle.

Then the submarines put in to the bunkers. The men cleared their belongings out of the lockers and took the bus to the Prien Compound. There the flotilla commander presided over a dinner attended by the officers and crews of all three boats. It was a good meal, with beer, more speeches, and at the end cognac.

After dinner Teichmann had his sea-chest brought to his cabin, which he now had all to himself, and set up housekeeping. He was able to buy what he needed in the canteen: two bottles of Hennessy, two bottles of Armagnac, a bottle each of Martell and Calvados, and ten boxes of cigarettes, six of which he exchanged for cigars. A sailor helped him to carry the bottles to his cabin.

Then he went to the shower-room and took a generous shower—warm, cold, hot, lukewarm, then as hot as he could stand, and finally cold. He allowed himself an hour. Half the crew was assembled there, and they sang in the shower or groaned voluptuously as they washed away the accumulated grime of three months.

Teichmann wrapped his towel round his neck, slipped into dressing-gown and slippers and ran to his cabin. He lay down on the freshly made bed and lit a cigarette. As he was inhaling the delicious smoke, there was a knock at the door. He called, "Come in."

A man greeted him with a crisp "Heil Hitler," and introduced himself as a staff officer. He handed Teichmann his pay, plus underwater

bonus and danger bonus. He counted out the money, although Teichmann told him it wasn't necessary. It was second nature, the man said; he had been a bank manager before the war. Teichmann said he was glad to make his acquaintance and reached under the bed where he had stowed away his bottles. The bank manager drew a fresh white handkerchief from his pocket and unfolded it, revealing a small glass. When he came to pay the higher ranks, he confided, he always brought his little glass along. Teichmann admired the man's sense of the social amenities.

They drank each other's health and began to chat. Teichmann apologized for drinking from the bottle; he hadn't had time to get a glass. The bank manager said this manner of drinking was very becoming to Teichmann, and Teichmann thanked him for the compliment. He decided the bank manager was a great fellow. And the bank manager formed the same opinion of Teichmann.

They drank to the health of Teichmann's captain. When Teichmann told him his captain was a teetotaller, the bank manager said that called for two toasts. Then they drank the health of the flotilla commander and the Grand Admiral of the Submarine Fleet. Then Teichmann reached under the bed and brought out a new bottle. The Führer was given a double toast because he too was a teetotaller. And they drank one or two to Goebbels because his fairy-tale hours on the radio gave them so much pleasure.

The bank manager was drunk. He put his glass in his pocket and took his leave with as much formality as his condition permitted. Teichmann presented him with the bottle of Calvados. He did not look as if he would partake of his gift in any hurry. Teichmann was the last to be paid that day; in fact, the staff officer left his pay-roll and cash-box on Teichmann's bedside table. Teichmann tossed it all under his bed for safe-keeping.

Then he began to read. Weissenstein had lent him the book—"very witty, something you really have to read"—but it didn't quite work out. He sat bolt upright and commanded himself to read at least ten pages, to prove that he wasn't tight. But it was a failure.

The worst part of it was that he couldn't sleep. He had lost the habit of sleeping in a bed that didn't move. There was nothing for it but to reach under the bed again.

After a while he dozed off. He was back at sea; he felt like a sea-gull

riding the waves, and suddenly he understood how gulls are able to sleep on the rolling sea.

WHEN HE woke up, the sun was shining. He blinked for a while and then read his mail.

Heyne had written again, this time from Swinemünde, where he was taking a gunnery course. He related only his experiences, without comment, but between the lines his friend could read a cynical commentary on his surroundings. The letter was addressed to Teichmann and Stollenberg.

Teichmann went without breakfast. He sought out the banker and returned pay-roll and cash-box. The officer hadn't missed them; he was still asleep.

At the docks Teichmann ran into an old friend. He recognized him at once from the rear: no two men walked like that. It was Ramer, another Naval College student. He wore his hair long and wavy, and when he turned round Teichmann saw that he had developed a comfortable little paunch. He informed Teichmann that he was the flotilla's assistant paymaster, and he definitely looked the part. "My boy, I've been getting ahead."

"I can see that."

"No, I can't complain. First-class food, first-class drink—and women like sand on the seashore."

"How many patrols have you got?"

"Not one, so far. Man, don't get that look on your face; I work hard. I'm knee deep in work. Papers, papers, red tape. In addition to everything else, I'm substituting for the Welfare Officer, and you can't even imagine all the work that gives me. But for you I'll shut up shop. Dinner's on me."

Teichmann told Ramer about Stollenberg.

"What are you going to write his parents?" Ramer asked. "I've got to know because of being Welfare Officer."

"I won't say anything about the amputation. I'll write that he was killed on deck and I'll say he died instantly." Teichmann spoke more rapidly than usual. "I don't imagine his parents will ever see the captain's log."

They talked about Heyne and other fellow students until it was time

for Ramer to go back to his office. They made an appointment for the evening to go to a certain café in the rough part of town, a spot very popular with the submarine officers.

On the way to the café Ramer told Teichmann about a girl there who induced the patrons to buy drinks; called La Jaune, she was a cross between a Malay and a mulatto, or maybe some kind of Creole. . . . He broke off his description of La Jaune's charms. "Say, who's that?"

"Ah-ha, puts your eye out, eh?"

"Lord in heaven, look at the way he walks."

"That's the handsomest man in the fleet: His Highness Ehrenfried Berthold Prince von Wittgenberg-Weissenstein."

"How do you come to know him?"

"Our number one."

The first lieutenant came striding up, every bit the prince. He wore an impeccably fitting blue uniform of the finest serge; his weather-beaten neck was framed in a resplendent white shirt with an open collar so cut as to disclose a bit of the curly hair on his chest. He held his cap like an opera hat in his left hand, and in his right he swung a cane. But the most striking part of his costume was the decorations. On the left breast there was nothing. But on the right breast there was a delicate gold embroidery representing the German Cross, and the Iron Cross Second-Class dangled like a pendulum on a long black, white and red ribbon affixed to the topmost buttonhole of his jacket. In his breast pocket he had a white silk handkerchief folded in the shape of a fan.

"No applause, gentlemen, I know how I look. And how did you spend your first night?"

"Seriously. Reading."

"Splendid, splendid. And now, if I mistake not, we are headed for the same place?"

"Yes," said Teichmann. "Do you know La Jaune?"

"I have not yet had the pleasure. But I've heard of her." He fell into step with the midshipmen.

As their eyes penetrated the dark interior of the café, Ramer pointed out La Jaune, sitting at a table; then he said, "Hell, somebody got here ahead of us."

"That woman has really got class," Teichmann said. "But the character with her is my captain."



"That's Lüttke?"

"Yes. It so happens."

"Is that bad?"

But Weissenstein did not hold back, and the midshipmen followed him to the table. He made a perfect bow, mumbled part of his name, and said, "*Je suis très heureux de vous voir, madame.*"

La Jaune nodded. Weissenstein introduced his companions. For the first time Teichmann saw his captain

at a loss. All he did was suck in air audibly through his aquiline nose.

"*Permettez, madame, que je prenne place à côté de vous,*" said Weissenstein, and sat down beside her. "*Permettez que je vous présente mon capitaine.*"

"What did he say?" asked Lüttke.

"He asked permission to sit down. Then he introduced you to the lady, sir," said Teichmann.

"You've got a nerve, number one," said the captain.

"I didn't mean to offend you, sir," said the first lieutenant. "But if you need an interpreter. . . ."

"I do not need an interpreter."

"*Mais votre prononciation est excellente,*" said La Jaune to Weissenstein.

"He is one of my subordinates, madame," said the captain in English.

This went on for an hour. The captain spoke English, Weissenstein French; Teichmann translated, and Ramer just listened. La Jaune was enjoying herself immensely. They drank some sticky peppermint liqueur—she had ordered it—which stimulated the conversation. From time to time a wing commander came over and drank their health. He was very pleased to have friends in this perilous spot, and he drank repeatedly to the Navy. Then he went back to his table, which he shared with a lady approximating his own years. The prince ordered a bottle of soda water.

"*Le capitaine s'adhère à l'abstinence, madame,*" said Weissenstein.

"What's he saying?"

"He says that you are abstemious, sir," said Teichmann.

"From you, Weissenstein," said the captain, "I would have expected better manners than to seat yourself at my table, uninvited and indulge in personal remarks."

"*Alors qu'est-ce-qu'il fait ici?*"

"Sir," said Weissenstein, "madame would like to know what you are doing here."

For the second time the captain was at a loss. Finally he shouted at his first lieutenant, "What are *you* doing here?"

"It is my intention to enjoy the lady's company, sir."

Lüttke rose wrathfully to his feet, but the bit of alcohol he had imbibed to please La Jaune had not agreed with him, and he teetered slightly.

"*Bon soir, mon capitaine,*" said La Jaune.

"What——"

"Madame wishes you a very good evening," the number one translated.

Lüttke abandoned all pretence at presenting a menacing figure. He muttered something about "bad company," took his hat, and left.

"Gentlemen," said Weissenstein, "this is a significant moment. It is probably the only time our captain has ever sounded the retreat. Let us raise a glass to his health and honour."

The wing-commander came back to their table and asked leave to drink the health of his good old comrades from the Navy. They permitted him to do so. The wing-commander was delighted and drank so generously to the health of the Navy that his lady had to steer him away from their table.

There were still three of them; obviously too many for the small recessed booths where the couples retired who wanted to enjoy their drinks and company alone together. They were discussing this among themselves when suddenly La Jaune, who had been sitting silent and seemingly bored during this dialogue, opened her mouth and said in German: "Gentlemen, you 'ear I spik pretty well Zjerman, *n'est-ce pas?* . . ."

"Did you understand what we were just saying?" asked Weissenstein, somewhat alarmed.

"Oh, ect was verry nice. But now it eez for me to shoose, no?"

"Why, certainly, madame," said Weissenstein, his spirits reviving.

"*Bien*, I vood like zis one." She pointed to Teichmann.

Weissenstein's bronzed neck turned red, his face grew suddenly apoplectic, and his hands played the piano on his knees.

"Oh, do not be *offensé*, my *chéri*, you look verry nice, and are verry *charmant*, you 'ave many advantage, you speak verry good French and many many sings—but he is strongair, *compris*?"

"*Force majeure, mon prince*," said Teichmann.

WHEN HE went away later, the moon was sinking and La Rochelle was asleep.

La Jaune had been good company, gay and tender in turn, and her ludicrous German had amused Teichmann. He had asked if he could give her a little present—something to fatten her commission on the drinks. Surprisingly she had asked for a picture of himself.

He had none. In vain he poked round in his wallet. He only had the photograph in his pay-book, but he couldn't give that away. Finally he discovered a group photograph taken while he was a recruit. She studied the picture very attentively, pointing to one or another of his comrades, asking their names or commenting on them. Then her long, pointed, red-lacquered finger-nail came to rest on a good-natured, childlike face, and Teichmann began to tremble all over. He buried his head in his hands on the table.

At first the woman cried out "*Mon Dieu*," then she fell silent and rested her hand on his head. She sat waiting, from time to time glancing at her watch.

When he had calmed, she lit a cigarette, pulled his head up by the hair, and stuck the cigarette between his lips.

"Has he long been dead?"

"No."

"Out on ze sea?"

"Yes."

"I am very sorry *pour toi*. You 'ave not many *camarades*, *n'est-ce pas*?"

"Oh yes, yes. . . ."

"Zen you are not always all alone?"

"No, no. I'm not alone; not now, no. . . ."

Now, AS HE made his way home to the Prien Compound, everything was silent and a little blurred; a spring mist hung over the city, refreshingly cool, and if the streets hadn't been so dirty it could have been a German town. Teichmann was musing over this when he felt a cold puff of wind in his face and a small hard object hit him in the chest. It didn't hurt particularly. And then he heard the shot. He flung himself to the ground. It just grazed me, he said to himself. He heard footsteps and he heard his heart beating against the stone pavement. The stone felt like ice. His face lay flat on the ground and in front of his nose he saw a little eddy of dust as he breathed out. There were two men. He lay still. They moved as lightly as cats. They ran towards him. I'm unarmed, he thought. I haven't even a knife. I'll play dead.

One of the men was over him. He reeked of liquor. When he leaned down, Teichmann swung like a scythe cutting only a hair's breadth above the ground, and knocked the man's feet from under him. The man fell, a metallic object clanged on the cobblestones, and he said something that Teichmann did not understand. Without reflecting, Teichmann beat the man's head against the cobblestones—twice in quick succession. Then he ran after the other man.

The man ran very fast. But I'll last longer, Teichmann thought, and ran as fast as he could. The Frenchman was small and as quick as a greyhound. He was running for his life, and that gave him extra speed. As Teichmann ran, he noticed that he was lost; the neighbourhood was unfamiliar to him. Maybe he's drawing me into an ambush, he thought, and slowed down. The distance between them increased. He was going to give up, but then the Frenchman turned about and ran back towards him. Teichmann stopped short. Something cold and prickly ran down his back. He held his breath and saw the Frenchman's cosh, and for a second he saw the face, which seemed to be made of pure terror. With the thought, He's more scared than I am, he sprang.

The Frenchman swung long before Teichmann was within reach. When he raised his cosh to strike again, Teichmann seized the upraised arm from below. It was the simplest of all ju-jitsu holds; the cosh fell to the street. The Frenchman went stiff with terror. And then Teichmann's fists struck him as though to smash his face into little pieces.

"That's enough, boy. There won't be anything left of him." Teichmann felt himself pulled away.

"Oh, the night patrol! Well, it's damn nice of you to get here."

"He came running towards us," said the petty officer in charge, "and then he suddenly turned round and . . ."

"And ran at me," said Teichmann. "But he'd already taken a pot-shot at me." He told the night patrol what had happened.

They picked the Frenchman up; they had to carry him. The other Frenchman had not stirred. He was still on his knees with his head on the ground. He was dead.

Teichmann picked up his cap. The petty officer picked up the revolver. It was a German make; there were still five shots in it. "Some people are lucky," said the petty officer. Teichmann furnished his name, unit and present address.

It was daylight by the time he stood under the shower at the Prien Compound and examined the dark spot on his chest. He was rubbing it when a lieutenant and a chief petty officer came for him. "Get dressed on the double and come along. It's important." They were very excited.

The car stopped in front of the Kommandantur. Teichmann was led to a room where an army major and a naval surgeon-commander were sitting pale and nervous at the table.

"Have you had breakfast?" the major asked.

"No," said Teichmann.

"Then hold on to yourself," said the surgeon-commander, and led Teichmann, followed by the major and the Navy lieutenant and the chief, into the next room.

"Do you know any of these men?" asked the lieutenant. "Take a good look. They were at the same café as you, at the same time."

"Except that they left sooner," said the surgeon-commander.

The corpses were mutilated beyond recognition.

"Look closely. You must know them," the lieutenant said.

"That brown mess comes from acid," said the chief petty officer.

They all looked the same; one had corns—an oblique strip of sunlight fell right on them. "Must have been an older fellow," said Teichmann. "Where are the uniforms?"

"Gone," said the lieutenant. "No sign of them."

They all looked at Teichmann. He looked at each of the three corpses in turn. In the end he recognized Ramer's hair. He felt pretty sure it was Ramer's hair because it was so long.

"Well, that's one, at least," said the chief petty officer.

"Who did it?" asked Teichmann, startled at the loudness of his own voice.

"The French, of course. Who'd you think?" said the lieutenant, shrugging his shoulders.

"The swine!" said Teichmann, his voice growing still louder. "That's the only way they know how to make war. I thought they had signed an armistice. Attacking at night and from behind, drinking to give themselves courage—the cowardly dogs. Ramer was my friend. . . ."

"Yes, it's sad," said the major.

"Sad!" shouted Teichmann. "Those dirty swine. And what's going to happen to them?"

"The most we can do is shoot them," said the chief petty officer.

"If we catch them," said the lieutenant. "Cigarette?"

"You ought to skin them alive, half an inch a day. And when they pass out, you stop until they come to, and . . ."

"Don't you want a cigarette?"

"No, thank you. Listen to what I'm saying." He seized the major by the buttons of his uniform. "You mustn't kill them right off, promise me that. It wouldn't be right . . . the lousy murderers. They aren't soldiers, they're murderers. They're . . ."

"Yes, yes, it's terrible," said the major and tried to free himself.

"Where's that Frenchman? Where's my Frenchman? The swine belongs to me. I'll deal with him, see. Nobody's going to take him away from me. Where is he? He's not going to be tried by any court; he's mine, I'll . . ."

"Take it easy, my lad," said the surgeon-commander. He laid a hand on Teichmann's shoulder.

Teichmann left the Kommandantur. Everything about him was like absorbent cotton. His feet walked on cotton and felt like cotton, and his throat was stopped up with a great wad of cotton which he kept trying to swallow. He could think of nothing and was amazed to find himself suddenly at the Prien Compound, bathed in sweat. He went to the shower-room; the shower was still running. When he left the room soon after, he heard the men laughing behind him. "Say, he must be completely sozzled." "Under the shower in full uniform." "I'd like to be that sozzled some time."

La Jaune was shot four days later. She and the other girls in the café had arranged to dismiss the victims at suitable intervals so that the Maquis should not have too much work at one time. The first victim was the wing-commander, the corpse with the corns. The next had been Ramer, and the third had been the chief engineer of a submarine; they were particularly keen on submariners. Teichmann was to have been the last. Lüttke and Weissenstein had been lucky to leave early. Two other girls and the Frenchman whom Teichmann had caught were also shot.

Teichmann was furious that La Jaune had only been shot. To down his rage he drank. He drank for several days, always managing to find a few companions. But Stollenberg was no longer there, and the drinking didn't help.

CHAPTER 4

ON THE next patrol there were new faces.

Herling, the new chief engineer—the captain had got rid of Meyer—was a strange man. He had a face like a lump of dough and usually kept his mouth open, which gave him a singularly foolish look. When Teichmann met him for the first time, he took him for a dock-worker. He had on a frayed, faded jumper that didn't even reach to his waist; his head was bare, his hair unkempt. When Teichmann introduced himself, the engineer nodded and held out a huge hand.

But this man, who looked as if he couldn't count to three, had managed to escape from a British P.O.W. camp, and, as his pay-book revealed, he was the son of a distinguished diplomat. Once when this bit of information was brought up in the mess, he said gravely, "My mother must have been carrying on with the plumber in those days, because my father really does look like an ambassador."

An embarrassed silence followed. Then Teichmann said, "You have a sense of humour."

"Did you expect me to weep?" said Herling, and from that day on they knew that he was not quite what he looked.

Two days before sailing a new second lieutenant came aboard. As he was reporting for duty, Lüttke said, "Don't whisper. I didn't get your name."

"Lieutenant Petersen, sir."

"Confound it, speak up. I certainly don't intend to strain my ears on your account."

"I've got an obstruction in my throat, sir. I can't speak any louder."

"What kind of obstruction?"

"A shell splinter, sir. It's a very small one, but they can't get it out. The doctors say"

"What the doctors say doesn't interest me in the least. I expect you to speak loudly and distinctly."

"Aye aye, sir."

"That was better, but there's still room for improvement. I'll make a man of you yet. And now go and have a little talk with the first lieutenant. He'll tell you how to keep out of my bad books."

AFTER THE submarine put to sea, the first thing that happened was the bombing.

Teichmann saw the bomb falling and coming straight towards him; then, in a flash, like an unexpected close-up in a film, it was right in front of him, a round tower, immense and yellow. He heard a scream and fell flat, and then there was the clang of metal striking metal.

It struck a yard behind the bridge. The men stood for a moment as though paralysed. The captain hurried up from below and stood there, trembling with rage. When he could speak it was as though he forced the words through his clenched teeth: "Get that thing overboard." Then he turned his back to the bomb, as if it didn't exist.

It had grazed the after bridge rail, driven through the wooden deck covering, and left a slight dent in the pressure hull. The contact with the rail had turned it round; it had struck with the detonator upward. It was easy to make the bomb harmless; but it was quite a job getting the thing overboard. With the help of an improvised tackle and two crow-bars, they managed it in fifteen minutes. Meanwhile the second watch manned the anti-aircraft gun in case the plane should return.

The captain ordered a dive. He ordered the engineer to take her down to two hundred and sixty-five feet, an unusual depth when the boat was not under attack. It was as though he wished to stage the ensuing scene in his own uncontested domain.

He sat in the ward-room. Facing him stood the four men of the first watch. The doors were closed.

"From which sector did the plane come?"

"From mine, sir," said Weissenstein.

"The after look-outs are dismissed."

The two after look-outs departed.

"One question, Weissenstein. An answer in the affirmative will simplify the whole proceedings. Were you asleep?"

"Sir, I respectfully request you to withdraw that question. I regard it as an insult."

"I don't give a damn how you regard it. I want an answer."

"Then I respectfully request that you bring charges against me and . . ."

"You needn't worry. I'll bring charges and you will be court-martialled. You may regard the present proceedings as a preliminary hearing. I now ask you for the last time: Were you asleep? Yes or no?"

"No."

"What is your explanation, then?"

"I have no explanation, sir."

Thus far the captain had been speaking in his usual, slightly contemptuous maner, but now he changed his tone. Softly, cautiously, as though waiting for his adversary to fall into a trap, he said, "Visibility?"

"Four to five miles, sir."

"Atmospheric condition?"

"Hazy. Streaks of mist, sir."

"Height of clouds?"

"Three to four thousand feet, sir."

"Very well." The captain's voice grew loud again: "Supposing the plane had attacked by the shortest route. With the weather conditions you have just described, you would have seen it at a distance of seven to eight thousand yards and a height of at least three thousand feet. Is that clear?"

"Yes, sir. But the plane was not flying horizontally. It dived and came out of the clouds about five hundred yards ahead, dropped its bomb, and went back into the clouds."

"If that's the truth, the plane must have been piloted by the devil himself."

"I have no explanation to offer, sir."

The captain took his hands out of his pockets and sat up straight. He

leaned forward, placed his elbows on the table, and rested his chin on his folded hands. He looked hard for a moment at Weissenstein, as though seeing him for the first time. And then, in the tone one might use to reassure an upset child, he said quietly, "Weissenstein, there's more at stake than your person or mine or my boat. I've got to know how such an attack could have been possible. Now, surely you must have heard the sound of engines?"

"Only as the plane was leaving, sir. Not on the approach."

Lüttke looked at Teichmann. "Did *you* hear engines?"

"Yes, sir." Teichmann paused dramatically. He wanted to torture the captain a bit. And then, just as Lüttke was about to open his mouth, he said, "But only after the bomb had been dropped. Up till then the engines were turned off."

"That is nonsense. How would you know the engines were dead? If you insist you may say, I, So-and-So, Senior Midshipman, heard no sound of engines—but I forbid such unwarranted assertions as you have just made. Do you understand?"

"Yes, sir."

"Send me the two after look-outs."

When they had come, the captain asked about engine sounds. Their reply was the same as the first lieutenant's. They were dismissed. Petty Officer Arndt thrust his head in, "Cook to captain: Lunch is ready."

"Not interested."

"Request permission to dish up, sir."

"Refused."

Suddenly Lüttke jumped up and sprang at the first lieutenant. "Weissenstein," he roared, "you were asleep. All the rest is nonsense. Don't you realize that, if what you say is true, the war's over as far as submarines are concerned? We can all report to the Army and peel potatoes. That's a lot of bilge you were giving me. I'm going to have you court-martialled, you . . ."

They had never seen him so excited. He was wild with rage. It looked as if he wanted to kill Weissenstein. Suddenly, aware that he had forgotten himself, he rose abruptly and went to his room and closed the curtain.

"Why does he hate me so?" Weissenstein asked Teichmann at supper. "I can't tell him any more than the truth."

"He doesn't hate you, he hates somebody else. . . ."

"The British?"

"I think he hates the men who sent him into this war. In spite of everything, he's a good sailor. Those people back home could hardly hope for a better one."

"I don't understand it."

"I don't either. It's more a matter of feeling. I don't like him, but sometimes I think that this battle of his has become a kind of religion, the only justification for his life. He doesn't know how to do anything else, so he fights as hard and as bravely as he can. At times I have the feeling that he doesn't think much of the men who sent him into this fight. But he's never said a word. Maybe he doesn't ask why; maybe he thinks what matters is *how* you fight and not *why*—he's a professional warrior. What else can he do to keep his self-respect?"

When Weissenstein came off watch at midnight and the W/T pad was given him to countersign, he saw that a special radio message had been sent, and on the "Commander's confidential" pad, "*Court-martial filed against Lieutenant Prince Ehrenfried B. von Wittgenberg-Weissenstein for negligence while on watch. Lüttke.*"

Weissenstein signed underneath.

SIX DAYS later U-Boat Command reported the departure of a convoy from Boston and detailed seven U-boats, including U-372, to attack it. The submarines patrolled off Boston, searching for their prey. Then an unusual radio signal arrived.

Teichmann had had the evening watch. Shortly after midnight he was awakened by the chief engineer and summoned to the control-room. The first and second lieutenants were sitting there, studying a special W/T signal. It was addressed to all submarines in the area and ordered them to discontinue all attacks on escorted convoys in the North Atlantic and to shift to the mid-Atlantic. The four of them sat there, trying to decide what to do. The captain was asleep. But when Arndt brought in an urgent message from a submarine that had sighted a westbound convoy, there was no further room for discussion; they had to wake the captain.

Lüttke came in immediately and sat down at the chart-table with the two radio messages on the chart before him. He took the protractor and

drew lines. His pencil point broke. He threw the pencil on the floor. One of the men picked it up, sharpened it, and then, as inconspicuously as possible, put it back on the table.

"Full ahead both, course two-one-one."

The quartermaster in the conning-tower repeated the order; the captain went back to his cabin.

"Well, that's that," said Teichmann. "As far as he is concerned, there's no such thing as an escorted convoy."

None of them were green hands, and all had been through more than one attack on a convoy; yet almost everyone felt edgy when the engines were at "full ahead."

Shortly before 0600 the coxswain reported, "Shadows bearing two-four-o."

"Action stations," the captain called down the tower, and just then the chief engineer appeared on the bridge with a pot of hot, wonderfully aromatic coffee. "Want some?" he asked.

"What are you talking about?" said the captain.

"Coffee, sir."

"I'd like a cup," said Teichmann.

"I ordered action stations, not a coffee party," said the captain furiously.

But Teichmann got his cup. Herling poured it out calmly and handed it to him. Then he vanished. From below he called up, "To captain: Lower deck is at action stations."

A few seconds later the number one reported, "Torpedoes ready."

Then came a new batch of orders from the captain: "Both full ahead, course one-two-o. Prepare tubes one to five for surfaced attack. W/T, signal to U-Boat Command: *Convoy sighted, course two-one-o, speed eight knots. Am attacking.* Coxswain, what is attack course?"

What happened now had happened in innumerable battles and drills. Each man knew exactly what he had to do, and he did it calmly and precisely, as though it were the most natural thing in the world. Each man was practising his trade.

The boat flew through the water, racing in a wide circle for the head of the convoy. The lazy whale had turned into a fierce and intricate war machine that cut through the water like a knife. The men on the bridge could feel the change: the wind whistled louder, spray fell on their

binoculars, the deck trembled beneath their feet. The diesels seemed to have gone mad—"If they keep on like that, the engines will jump up on deck," said the coxswain. The bow wave rose high, the foam took on a lighter colour, and the forward section of the boat seemed to rise. And all this gave the men a glorious feeling that nothing could diminish—not even the knowledge that death was possible if not probable. The hearts of the look-outs pounded like hammers; their eyes bored into the retreating night; their breath came in jerks, more in than out, and for a few seconds—when they thought, Now he's sighted us—they stopped breathing altogether and hot shudders ran through them. With every moment the tension mounted, until it became almost unbearable. And yet they felt an unknown force gathering within them, breaking down all normal barriers, sweeping away the little habits, the little fears, the little desires and emotions of everyday life. It was as though they had suddenly awakened to real life, to a higher, stronger, fuller life.

The sea had risen. White crowns danced on the short, choppy waves. The sea was now coming from ahead, and the binoculars of the forward look-outs kept getting wet and had to be handed down into the tower to be dried. But on the ships guarding the convoy the look-outs were sheltered; their glasses were dry and clear.

So far they had made out a destroyer and three corvettes. The corvettes were at the head of the convoy. The destroyer circled round it like a sheep dog guarding its flock. The sub set a course towards the target.

"We can't go much closer," said the captain to the number one. "It's getting too light."

"Yes, sir."

They didn't get a chance to fire. The convoy had zigzagged.

The men cursed. Weissenstein swore as he stood at the cruising periscope and thought aloud, "All they had to do was to hold their course for twenty seconds more—that wasn't *picobello* of them."

"Fall out action stations. We'll get ahead again and attack submerged," said the captain.

"Aye aye, sir," the number one replied.

Gone was the intoxication that had seized the men earlier. They felt weary, let down. And their nerves were on edge.

By a few minutes after nine they were again in position and the boat dived for an attack. .

The chief engineer trimmed the boat and went to periscope depth with impressive speed. Then they heard the ships. They were approaching quickly.

First the corvettes passed over, and the high whirring of their speeding screws could be heard. Then came the lumbering merchant ships. Their propellers turned slowly and a trifle irregularly; the tone was an octave lower than that of the corvettes. But before they could pass over, Lüttke fired.

The stop-watches were set in motion. A dozen eyes were glued to each of them. Those who could not see a watch counted softly, and at fifty-two there were four explosions in quick succession. The men exchanged looks and nodded as though to say, That's Lüttke's precision work.

"They must be pretty cross up there," said Herling.

"You'd be cross too," said Teichmann.

"What's going on down there?" Lüttke called down from the conning-tower. Herling stepped over to the hatch and called up, "Would you like some coffee now? It's still warm."

"What's that?"

"Coffee."

"See here, Herling, you'll send me round the bend with your damned coffee."

"I meant the quartermaster, sir."

Actually, the captain was not very angry; he seemed impressed by Herling's beer-hall tranquillity. He grumbled something that no one could understand. Then he said, "Herling, how's the boat?"

"Trim, sir."

"What?"

"Trim, sir. Periscope depth."

And he was right. The sea was choppy, but he had the boat at forty-five feet on the line. Lüttke could find no fault with that.

"Keep awake, Herling. I'm going down in a minute. I'm going to dive under the convoy."

"I always keep awake, sir."

The screws of the merchant ships turned as though nothing had happened, no faster and no slower than before. But they grew louder. Here and there were sounds of breaking bulkheads. The hydrophone-room reported sinking noises.

"Depth one hundred feet. Down periscope," said the captain, coming down into the control-room. Only the quartermaster now remained in the conning-tower.

The convoy passed overhead, ship after ship, a gigantic armada. It seemed endless. As long as there were merchant ships overhead, the warships could do nothing to the sub. The men knew that. But even so the grinding of the propellers over them was unpleasant and disturbing. Bright of the captain to dive under the convoy, the men thought. It was the only thing he could do; there was no other possibility. But the men didn't like to think of necessity; they preferred to dwell on their captain's intelligence. That buoyed them up a bit. At this point they needed someone to believe in. Their lives were in the captain's hands: they had to believe in him.

Without warning the first depth-charge struck, with a devastating roar and a shock as though a volcano had erupted beneath the boat.

It was not too close, but it was bad enough. The men stared at the deck of the control-room and waited. Dead faces, faces cut in stone. Apart from the captain, the chief engineer, the telegraphist and the quartermaster, they had nothing to do. That was the worst part of it. "They just dropped that one for the hell of it," said Herling. But this was not true, and they all knew it. The "sweeper"—that was what they called the destroyer astern of the convoy—must have located them.

And a moment later the finger was on them. They had been expecting it, yet secretly hoping that it might spare them just this once, perhaps by some technical failure or human error—some minor negligence on the part of the operator. For every man in the submarine knew that that innocent tapping on the side was the next thing to a death sentence.

"Asdic," cried Arndt from the hydrophones. They had all heard it.

"Go slowly to two hundred and sixty-five feet," said the captain.

"Go to two hundred and sixty-five feet," Herling repeated. Then he went on talking. The men could not believe their ears. He gave the hydrophone operators their orders and in between chatted with Weissenstein and Teichmann. When they heard the destroyer starting on a run, he said to Teichmann, "Do you know this one?" and told a funny story.

He told it so well that the captain said nothing, and the men listened and didn't look up until the destroyer started its run. The captain ordered "hard dive" and both engines to "emergency full ahead." He gave the

quartermaster the new course. The submarine was now at three hundred and sixty feet. The destroyer was coming on at high speed, making directly for them. Its screws spun furiously.

And then she was over them. They heard whole bunches of depth-charges splashing in the water. Each bunch had ten or fifteen times the effective range of a single charge. The men heard very clearly, and they crawled into themselves, making themselves very small, but not small enough to elude the horror that was coming at them.

Twenty-one depth-charges went off.

The explosions lasted half a minute. Everything that was made of glass smashed. Water seeped in through the hatches. Each detonation was followed by a thrust. All the lights went out. The men had turned to inert matter, part of the boat's fittings. U-372 was going down. Several rivets had sprung in the engine-room. Water spurted hissing on the hot engines. In the black darkness the sounds were two or three times as loud as by daylight. Steam spread through the boat. The hull began to strain, groaning as though expanding and contracting by fits and starts.

They were going down quickly. Six hundred and fifty feet of water were now weighing on the hull. This was what caused those hideous sounds, as if the next moment it would be crushed like a match-box in a giant's clenched fist. The asdic moved back and forth, searching the sea; then the destroyer came in once more to the attack.

Huddled on the deck, the men whimpered. And then they screamed, hoping perhaps to drown the sound of the destroyer's screws. But the sound persisted. And still the asdic prodded here and there, like a thin lance tightly probing a haystack to locate the fugitive hidden there.

It was an unequal contest. The destroyer was in every way superior; she was faster and more heavily armed, she had plenty of time, and in the asdic she had an unfailing technical eye. Against such odds bravery was useless. The men up there on the surface were hunters with field-glasses, pursuing a blind deer. They needed only to stand by and wait.

All this passed through Teichmann's head as he sat in panic fear on the deck plates of the control-room, waiting for the depth-charges. And then came hate. There was nothing he could do to dispel it. It was a loathsome animal that sat down beside him and grew steadily bigger. He didn't want it. He was a sailor and a fighting man; he had never hated the enemy. No one on board ever expressed feelings of hatred.

They were sailors and those men up above were sailors, and if they had to kill they did a good professional job of it, because it was their trade. They had nothing in common with the men who sat at home preaching hate because they lived off it.

Your hatred is childish, Teichmann said to himself. But the game was nasty and unfair. And it never stopped. The men screamed with fear, and they screamed with rage at their helplessness. The water round them was harder than steel. Explosive charges were being dropped into it, and when they exploded, something had to give—either the water or the boat.

"They're just trying to win a medal," said the captain after lighting up the depth-indicator and noting that the needle had stopped at its lowest point.

"They're annoyed up there," said Herling. "They're annoyed because we go to sea without asking them for permission."

"They think the Atlantic is an orchard and the Germans are naughty boys that steal cherries," croaked Petersen as loud as he could.

The captain calculated. He had to try for an evasion course at right angles to the destroyer's course, and to do so he had to get a pretty good idea of the destroyer's course. Everything could be calculated. If you wanted to survive in sea warfare, you had to know your mathematics; you had to be able to do your mental arithmetic even when depth-charges were going off all round you. And you had to know how to be alone. The captain of a submerged submarine was the loneliest of all people, and a single mistake in his calculations meant the life of his crew. And supposing several warships attacked him at once, no superior officer would tell him what evasion course to give the quartermaster. No superior officer would tell him, for there was none.

Yet for Lüttke there always seemed to be one. With the precision of an automaton Lüttke called out the new course through the blackness of the control-room.

More and more water was pouring in, and the chief engineer struggled to keep the boat from sinking any farther. Eight hundred and twenty-five feet was the limit if the crew was to remain alive.

The coxswain counted two hundred and eighteen depth-charges; then he gave up because the control-room table was all covered with lines. There were three ships on the surface now, destroyers or corvettes, circling round, dropping their depth-charges.

The first to crack under the strain was Schmidt. Herling had managed to raise the boat by pumping; she lay five hundred and twenty-five feet below the surface when twenty depth-charges went off at intervals of three seconds, and hurled her down again. Water drove through the valves. The pressure hull creaked. A number of rivets sprang. The steel tube writhed like a trampled worm. Everything movable was thoroughly shaken up. And when the crashes had ceased and the hull stopped quaking, there was a sound that still went on. At first the men thought that the quartermaster had fallen out of the conning-tower. But the sound continued. It was as though someone were throwing cabbages into the control-room. A dull thudding sound. Torches snapped on. It was Schmidt banging his head against the floor.

The lights went out immediately. But the thudding went on. Someone shouted, "Stop it!" Another cried, "Oh God——" and fell silent, realizing that it would take more than prayers to quiet a madman. In the end the captain had to give an order.

Nothing happened. Not a hand stirred. No one felt that he had been spoken to; it was pitch dark. A handful of pebbles was thrown against the side. The beam moved crackling along the hull. The boat was sinking. Again the pressure hull was groaning.

"Since when do I have to give an order twice?"

They reached for him—Weissenstein first, though he wasn't at all cut out for such operations. The coxswain gave him a hand. The sounds of struggle could be heard through the darkness. Petersen switched on his torch. Teichmann joined in. Schmidt began to bellow. Teichmann tried to pull his trousers down to keep him from kicking. He couldn't bend the man's arm back to tie him. The only thing he could do was hit him.

The man was quiet. They seized him and dragged him aft and locked him in the lavatory. He came to and began to bellow again. The screams continued, but now they were less audible.

Another explosion. The boat was going down. The pressure hull was straining, creaking, and occasionally popping. Then the popping became regular: *rat—tat—tat—tat—tat*.

Down. Down. Down. The sounds from the hull grew louder, loud enough to hurt the ears. The men no longer dared to breathe. If it would only happen quickly, they thought. This business of dying. If it would only end. . . .

But the end did not come. The pressure hull held. They had passed the eight-hundred-and-twenty-five-foot mark. The hull went *rat-tat-tat* like a machine-gun firing slowly.

"Herling," said the captain, "you'll have to bring her up a bit."

"Aye aye, sir." And the thin, steel-hard jets of water pouring into the boat whistled shrilly, as though sawing the hull into pieces.

The man at the hydrophone broke down. It might have happened a good deal sooner; the strain on his ears from the hydrophones was unbearable. He screamed a few times instead of reporting the sound bearings; then he burst out sobbing; he tore off his headphones and lay down in the gangway outside the hydrophone-room. Weissenstein took up the phones.

It went on and on. Several other men cracked up, but no one noticed, for they were not needed. The boat rose—she actually rose to four hundred and twenty feet; then there were twelve depth-charges that drove her down to six hundred and sixty. U-372 stood almost on her head, the men had to cling to rails, levers, wheels, valves, like monkeys to the branches of a tree; then she rose again, and then she hurtled down again. . . .

This up and down went on for eleven hours and forty minutes. Then the batteries were spent.

"All hands: Stand by for gun action. There are three escort vessels up there. We are going to sink them one after the other. Prepare to destroy confidential papers. Open food-lockers. Anybody can eat what he likes."

But the food-lockers were not opened; no one seemed to be hungry. Herling blew the tanks slowly and cautiously, alternating between tanks. Five depth-charges went off close to the side. The boat seemed to spin round. The crew screamed with terror and cursed with rage—louder and louder, more and more furious, as if they had all been waiting for someone to kill with their tongues.

"Silence!" cried the captain. When quiet was restored only the asdic beam could be heard tapping here and there. Slowly the boat staggered upward.

"First, I'm going to take a brief look round," said Lüttke, and added, "if it can be done."

"I'll take her to periscope depth, sir," said Herling.

"Make it as fast as you can."

They were up to two hundred and sixty feet. The higher they rose, the easier it was for the ships above them to aim their depth-charges. The eyes of the men in the control-room were glued to the needle of the depth-indicator beneath the splintered, cloudy glass. From time to time the torch trembled slightly in Petersen's hand, then Herling tapped the dial and the needle jumped. Slowly, slowly it rose. And fear gnawed at their entrails.

The first part of the miracle was that nothing was stirring up above. The crew became aware of it only when the captain called for the sound bearing and received the answer, "The enemy is not moving."

"But I hear his engines," the captain replied.

"Yes, sir, but the bearing doesn't change."

"He can't stand still with his engines running," said Herling.

"Oh yes, he can," said the captain. "You don't know about those things."

"Either those fellows have got us taped," came Petersen's death rattle, "or they haven't got us taped any more."

"If there were a medal for funny ways of putting things, you'd get it," said Lüttke.

"Thank you, sir."

When the boat had risen to one hundred and thirty feet, the whole miracle became clear. The boat rolled—gently, almost imperceptibly at first. The captain said to the chief engineer, "Herling, do you notice anything?"

At a hundred feet they all noticed: the boat was rolling slowly from side to side.

"Don't go any higher," said Luttke to the engineer. "Try to hold us where we are. Maybe a storm's blowing up. When it's pitch dark up there, we'll surface."

"Aye aye, sir."

Something passed through the boat. It went from stern to bow, and no one could say what it was. It was as though something had come to life in every compartment.

Herling tried to keep the boat in trim by pumping, and in the main he succeeded. In the next two hours only twenty-seven depth-charges were dropped. Some of them were not very close.

Then for thirty-five minutes nothing happened at all, except that the

asdic beam touched the side a few times as though to make sure the sub was still there. After another half-hour Lüttke went up to periscope depth.

They tossed and bobbed in the storm, but the chief engineer kept his trim by moving the crew about. The captain took a look and muttered, "It's black night." He looked again and said, "They're still there, but they've hove to. We surface."

When the men of the first watch were on the bridge and their eyes had grown accustomed to the darkness, they saw a destroyer lying hove to some three hundred yards away. They could see it only when it rose on the crest of a wave. In this weather the slender destroyer was for practical purposes unmanœuvrable; she had to attend to her own business to keep from capsizing.

The storm raged over the waves, carrying off their tops, as though to plane the sea smooth. The visibility was no more than half a mile. The men on the bridge clung fast and held their faces into the storm, and laughed when the sea broke over them. They loved the sea.

Lüttke ran away from the destroyer and charged his batteries. When they were full, he dived.

"I'D SOONER sink the old bucket than content myself with a couple of paltry Liberty ships," said Lüttke when Herling said something about the low morale of the crew. He headed for the mid-Atlantic convoy routes.

The nerves of some of the crew were shattered. Apart from Schmidt and the telegraphist, the engine-room personnel were in the worst state. They jumped at the slightest unexpected sound, swore at one another, wept hysterically, and made mistakes in performing the simplest operations. Their condition showed in their eyes, which protruded enormously, and their pupils flickered restlessly like candles in the wind.

One night the gyro-compass broke down. Teichmann woke up the chief electrician's mate, who set to work. Without the gyro it was impossible to navigate for any length of time; the magnetic compass in the control-room was hard to read and registered considerable deviation. The gyro-compass was indispensable for any offensive activity.

By the time the morning watch went on duty, the gyro-compass had been repaired. Two nights later, Teichmann caught Schofer, one of the

control-room hands, meddling with the gyro. He struck him in the face with the flat of his hand. Schofer went sailing through the control-room and landed with a crash. He lay still for a couple of seconds; then, still half dazed, he pulled himself up by the wheel of one of the diving tanks. Suddenly he cowered as if he had received another blow: before him stood the captain.

Teichmann hadn't seen him, and Schofer hadn't seen him; no one in the control-room had seen him—it was midnight and no one could have imagined that the captain would be awake. The control-room was dark except for the dimmed light over the chart-table. The captain was standing by the forward bulkhead.

Lüttke said nothing. His eyes were cold and distant, two balls of tempered blue steel. He went to the chart-table, took a drawing compass, stuck the point in the chart. Before drawing the circle, he spoke over his shoulder, without perceptibly turning his head: "Well, Schofer, it looks as if you stumbled."

When no answer came, the captain set down the compass and turned round, facing him. Then he said slowly, as though it made him sick to talk to Schofer, "In case you didn't stumble, you'll be dead in fifteen minutes. I will convene a ship's court-martial; after that you will stand up on deck and one of the men will fire the twenty-millimetre and . . ."

"I stumbled, sir."

As far as the captain was concerned, Schofer was no longer there. He busied himself with the chart. After that the gyro-compass behaved.

When Teichmann passed by the captain's quarters on his way to the P.O.'s mess for breakfast, he saluted silently as he did every morning. And then something unheard-of happened: the captain said, "Morning." It sounded more like a subdued clearing of the throat, but even so the word had been there. But if Lüttke imagined that Teichmann would respond, he was very much mistaken. Thereafter Teichmann continued to salute him in silence. The captain continued to say, "Morning." This went on for four days; then it was Lüttke's birthday.

As the senior chief petty officer, the coxswain opened the congratulation ceremonies. He presented the captain with a reading lamp that the chief electrician's mate had manufactured out of materials available on board. The captain said, "Thank you," and shook hands with the chiefs.

The other petty officers were represented by the E.R.A. who extended

a bunch of roses. The flowers were made of toilet paper coloured with red and blue ink and yellow water colour; the stems were wire wrapped in more toilet paper dipped in green water colour. The captain took his bouquet and held it awkwardly. Finally a painful "Thank you" slipped between his teeth. So much for the petty officers.

Then a middle-aged leading seaman whom Lüttke had repeatedly locked up for unnaval behaviour stepped forward on behalf of the hands. The seaman said nothing. He merely placed on the captain's table a good-luck pig made from a potato; captain and sailor contemplated the pig. It apparently felt quite at home and slid back and forth as though skating.

"That pig doesn't know how to stand still. . . ."

"It's the sea, sir; he ain't got his sea legs."

"He's got to have his sea legs if he wants to sail in my boat."

"Yes, sir."

The captain took the potato and pressed the four matches that served as legs deeper into it. Then he put the pig back on his feet, and he stayed still.

"He stands good now," said the seaman, overwhelmed by his captain's dexterity.

"His belly droops a bit, but that doesn't matter."

"Oh no, sir. Fact is, it's a brood sow."

"Well, let's hope she's going to have porkers. It wouldn't be bad if our good-luck pig had little ones."

"No, sir."

The captain held out his hand. The seaman pondered whether to take it. He pondered a bit too long; the captain withdrew his hand and nodded. And there the matter ended.

The officers presented no gifts, but each congratulated the captain personally.

Next morning, when Teichmann saluted, the captain said, "Morning, Teichmann." Teichmann stopped; he gave the captain a questioning look, and when Lüttke looked away he said, "Morning, sir."

They kept to this ritual; Teichmann remained the only man on board whom the captain addressed by name except in matters of duty.

AFTER cruising the mid-Atlantic for two weeks, the submarine made

for Gibraltar and hung round the entrance to the Mediterranean for nine days without sighting anything to attack. At 0300 on the tenth day—Weissenstein, Teichmann and a seaman look-out had the watch, and the night was black—a light suddenly flashed on them. It was so white and blinding that they closed their eyes and listened to the bullets whistling through the air and striking the hull. When that stopped, something exploded with a gigantic roar and threw them against the bridge coaming. A waterfall descended. Then it was night again. The whole thing hadn't taken ten seconds.

Teichmann noticed that Weissenstein was no longer beside him. He felt for him but it was his foot that found the number one. "Dive," the captain shouted below, and the engineer answered, "Ready to dive."

"Get in there," Teichmann said to the after look-out. Then he seized Weissenstein under the armpits, dragged him to the hatch, and dropped him. "Flood!" he cried, closed the hatch, and dogged it down. The main ballast tanks were flooded; he heard the water rushing in and felt the boat tip forward and dive. Then came the monstrous din of the quick-diving tanks being blown out, and suddenly his knees began to tremble, his head reeled, and he collapsed on the periscope stool.

The boat started for home. There was nothing else to do. Too many of the men were casualties. The captain's wishes were beside the point. He no longer said a word to anyone. After Teichmann had described the attack, the captain sent for a signal pad and wrote, "Withdraw demand for court-martial proceedings against Lieutenant Prince von Weissenstein. Lüttke." He gave the message to the first lieutenant to countersign.

Weissenstein had been hit in the legs; the bullets had passed clean through, and his wounds were not serious. But his head was affected. His features were distorted; his mouth remained crooked; he was unable to close it and, try as he would, he couldn't eat. His fingers trembled and the spoon slipped out of his hand. He was unable to countersign the signal form.

Two days before reaching port the electrician's mate died of appendicitis. For a couple of days they had treated him with hot compresses; when that did no good they had tried cold ones, and then lukewarm ones. When these didn't help they gave him a small dose of morphine to ease the pain, and after that all they could do, for want of a doctor, was to increase the dose.

When the boat tied up at La Pallice, there was a crowd on the pier. A returning submarine had become a rarity. Out of ten German subs that put out to sea, eight were lost. There was even a film-star, and a very good-looking one at that, on hand to welcome them. But she had tact enough to keep quiet. When the captain didn't take her bunch of flowers, she went on deck, broke it apart, and gave each man a flower. There were not enough flowers to go round, but still it was nice of her. The men loved her as one loves a sister, which was how it was intended.

The dead electrician's mate was carried out. A doctor took Schmidt and Arndt in hand. The crew cleared their mouldering belongings out of their lockers and carried them under their arms to the bus that was waiting outside the bunker.

When the crew had left the boat, Teichmann went back on board to get the number one. The captain was standing by his bunk. He looked at Teichmann as if he were a burglar. "What are you looking for?"

"The number one. I want to"

"Clear out. You will please mind your own business."

The swine, Teichmann thought on his way to the bus. The swine. As he was lighting a cigarette on his way out of the bunker, he saw the captain carrying the first lieutenant ashore.

CHAPTER 5

THIS TIME Gerd Heyne's letter invited Teichmann for a visit.

The sign on the garden gate outside the comfortable old house in the Hamburg suburb of Blankenese still read "Professor Friedrich Heyne, Hamburg University"; but Gerd was living there alone. He was a handsome young man with long black hair and an aquiline nose. "My old man's dead," he told Teichmann bluntly, as he gripped his hand. "I'm going to sea the day after tomorrow. Now make yourself at home, and we can let our hair right down."

They fried potatoes in the kitchen with the butter from Teichmann's travel ration. Then they brought up a few bottles of Château Rothschild Lafitte from the cellar. They put the bottles in the open fire-place in the living-room and brought up easy chairs. Heyne produced glasses; then he went into the garden and looked to see if the windows were properly blacked out.

Teichmann disliked the room. It was crammed full of books and plaster busts. Over the mantelpiece there were two crossed sabres; to the left of the sabres hung Bismarck, to the right old Kaiser Wilhelm.

It took a bottle and a half before Heyne was able to say what he had saved up for this night: "You're the only one I can talk to and you certainly didn't come here to discuss submarine warfare." As to submarine warfare, it had taken them only a few minutes to agree that it was absurd to go on with it, and that any new submarines being built would be too late. "And so—well, they took my father away last autumn. I didn't want to write you about it, because the post is censored and it wouldn't have done you or me or my father any good. It would only have got you into trouble, corresponding with the son of a traitor, and so on, and . . ."

"Just the same, I would have liked to . . ."

"I know. But why make trouble for you when you couldn't help? And that's the truth. You couldn't have done a damn thing. They're not exactly consistent, you know. They have no objection to letting the son of a criminal serve on a German submarine."

He quickly drained his glass. Then he poured himself another and leaned back comfortably in his arm-chair. "Yes, for them my father was a criminal. As a professor of history he thought he was entitled to open his mouth. And he did. Their reaction was just what you might have expected; it was nothing new.

"I was on a two-week leave after my first patrol. One day a student told me my father had delivered a lecture on the concept of power and that he had been pretty outspoken. I didn't take the matter very seriously, but when I got home that night my father had been arrested. I put on my uniform and went to Gestapo headquarters. I didn't get to see my father. They told me he had already been taken away and that I would be kept informed. They were very polite—on account of my medals, I thought.

"Next day I received orders to report at the Submarine School in Pillau. I was able to write my father twice, but I wasn't allowed to send him anything. In March a letter came from the administration at Belsen, saying my father had died suddenly; if I wished to claim his body, the transportation charges would be so many marks, to be sent to Postal Account Number So-and-so. Heil Hitler. That's the end of the story. Exciting, eh?"

Heyne turned on the radio. It took a while to warm up. They heard the tail end of the news and a repetition of the war bulletin. They heard words such as "heroic," "extreme bravery," "heroic sacrifice." Then a set of chimes rang out the first bars of "Stand fast in truth and rectitude." That was the intermission signal of the Deutschland radio station. Then a sultry female voice conveyed the people's greetings to the front. A few light pieces were played on the piano. Then there was dance music.

"My father wasn't the only one in the family. My mother's whole family was sent to concentration camps."

"What had they done?"

"Nothing, except for being alive. They were Jews, that's all, or rather half-Jews. I'm a quarter-Jew, you know, or maybe only an eighth; I'm not quite sure. All I know is that if I don't marry a Jewess, my children with only be sixteenth part Jews; they'll be allowed to live. I don't think they do anything to sixteenth-Jews."

"Where are they now?"

"Same place as my father."

"No—that's not possible."

"But it's true."

"But they can't kill people just because their parents were Jews?"

"Oh yes they can."

"But they must have done *something*?"

"I didn't want to believe it at first, but that's how it was. Help yourself. We'll open another. The wine is good, isn't it?"

Heyne opened another bottle and filled the glasses. The wine was wonderful. They drank it in little sips and let it lie on their tongues. It tasted of honey and warm sun and earth, with a tinge of iron. The taste was so good that they neglected to smoke.

"I can't believe that, Gerd. I can't . . ."

"But it's true, man!" Heyne shouted. "Forgive me, but that's just what riles me. Nobody believes it, and that's the worst part of it. It's driving me crazy. Do you understand that?"

"Do you think the service chiefs, the marshals, the admirals know about it?"

"No, I don't think so. The commander of the Air Force, Goering, yes. But I'm convinced that the Grand Admiral of the Navy has no idea of it. And that's what no one will believe later on when the war is lost. . . ."

"Are you so certain that we're going to lose it?"

"Don't be silly. America's in the war now. So from now on it's sheer quantity that counts. In the air and on the seas they are already twenty to one. We can't fight against such odds. We can only die."

"And you think the top brass know that?"

The radio played the "Tritsch-Tratsch Polka." Heyne seemed to be listening, but suddenly he cried out, "Yes, *that* they know. Unless they're pure idiots."

"You see things too black. . . ."

"Just a minute. How are you going to conquer Russia? How are you going to conquer England and America? Can you tell me that? They will conquer us. Our military leaders are perfectly aware of it, and nevertheless they will keep on fighting to the last grenade. And do you know why? Because they are good soldiers. And after the war . . ."

"You expect them to come through alive?"

"Service chiefs usually survive; they have the greatest chance of survival. And that too is very important for them, especially when the war is lost: because they've got to write their memoirs. And in their memoirs they'll tell us how, if this and that measure which they allegedly recommended had been taken on time, the war would have been won. But they weren't able to do as they wished, and for that a certain corporal was to blame; the very same corporal for whose benefit they had stood like ramrods, shouting, '*Heil mein Führer!*' if he was good enough to decorate them or give them a field-marshal's baton. And in those memoirs they will speak very profoundly about strategy and tactics. And of course they will say that they were motivated at all times by patriotism and nothing else."

Heyne lit a cigarette. He had to strike the match on the box several times to produce a flame; then he inhaled deeply, let the smoke filter through his nose, and put the cigarette down. "I always thought that it was up to the officer corps to set an example—but where were the German officers that night in November 1938 when the synagogues were burnt?" Heyne took another draw at his cigarette. "I waited for them to speak up. So did my mother. Next morning she committed suicide."

A pre-air-raid warning came over the radio. Large bomber formations, said the announcer, had been sighted over northern France, heading for Germany.

Heyne stubbed out his cigarette. "Hans—I ask you—since when have Germans attacked defenceless people and set fire to their temples? Since when? I don't want to play the prophet, but I can tell you one thing: that night is going to cost us more dearly than anything else in our whole history."

"Then what are we still fighting for?"

"I'll tell you. We are fighting so that a handful of men can go on governing and commanding a little longer. . . ."

"You are unjust, Gerd. I can understand that. You have a right to be. But you forget that we also have officers who take their profession as an ideal. They will not stand by while the German people go to the dogs. . . ."

"You forget that officers are specialists—narrow-minded, stubborn specialists. Experts in their field, oh yes. For that reason it will take the Allies a little while to defeat us. But what is outside their horizon, such as the burning of the synagogues, interests them only in passing. They will say, 'We didn't persecute the Jews'—and that is a typical German argument: in Germany when the bakeries are on fire, the butchers stand looking on, and vice versa. And the captains of industry will say, 'We didn't want the war'—no, they only financed it and made good money doing so. And the pastors will say, 'We didn't want Hitler.' But now I ask you: Who did want him, anyway?"

Outside, the sirens screamed, rising and falling. For a change the radio played a march.

Teichmann felt overcome. Heyne's words stuck in his brain like barbed arrows. They had come quickly and with deadly aim. He had been defenceless, and now he was powerless to pull them out. They stuck fast. He's right and he's wrong, Teichmann thought. It isn't as simple as it sounds; there is no such thing as black and white; there are only varying shades of grey.

"But that's how the Germans are, Hans. We have outstanding religious leaders and brilliant philosophers; we have gifted musicians and soldiers; we have clever bankers; we have everything—except human beings. Aha, here they come."

They heard the deep, steady droning high above them. They switched off the radio and listened in silence. They took it as an unavoidable natural phenomenon, the work of a higher power. The dispersed yapping



of the flak seemed absurd, like shooting a revolver at the moon. And the droning went on undiminished.

They went up to Heyne's room on the first floor. In the searchlight beams the falling bombs looked like the pearls of a broken necklace. Over the city the whole sky was blood-red.

They stood by the window breathing in the acrid smell of fire borne on the wind, and listened to the crash as the bombs landed. Now and then a great flame shot sky-high, as though someone were signalling with a giant searchlight.

Later, as they listened to the gramophone, the sky turned a sulphurous yellow. The planes were gone. The fires were still raging; the air blowing into the room bit their eyes and caught in their throats. But they left the windows open and went on listening to the music.

As they played Brahms' *Requiem* it was growing light outside. Teichmann could see Heyne. He sat motionless in his chair, his haggard face bent forward. Suddenly the awfulness of this war seized hold of him, harder than ever before, harder than when he had been in the midst of it.

On one of the records a woman sang, "*Now ye have conquered sadness . . .*" and it was very lovely to listen to. Then Heyne had to turn

the record over, and everything was as before; the music gave comfort only as long as you were listening to it. Teichmann didn't know whether or not he should be grateful for that. There was one more record, then the *Requiem* was ended.

"What we've just been doing," said Heyne, "is typically German."

"What do you mean? We haven't been doing anything."

"That's just it," Heyne laughed.

"You're a stinking quibbler. And I want to tell you this: I'm going to go on fighting the same as before. And all this stuff about losing the war is rot, that's all I . . ."

"Poor little fellow. Did I break your toy?"

"You jackass, you. Once and for all, you can go to hell," said Teichmann, trying to be angry. But he didn't quite succeed, and then he thought of Heyne's father. "But about your father, Gerd . . ."

"Shut up, and sing 'The Watch on the Rhine.'"

"Stop it!" cried Teichmann, and now he really was furious. "For God's sake, stop it!"

"But what else can I do?"

THEY CELEBRATED their farewell with a round of drinking in the cafés of Hamburg. They started directly after lunch. Some time in the early evening Heyne disappeared. It was after midnight when Teichmann got back to the house at Blankenese.

The door was locked, and that worried him; it must mean that Heyne wasn't home yet. Unlocking the door, he felt for the candle they had put there—since yesterday's air-raid there had been no electricity. He couldn't find the candle; no, he assured himself, he wasn't drunk; the candle was gone. He groped his way up to Heyne's room. When he opened the door, he saw a little candle-stump burning in the middle of the floor. Gerd is here, he thought; he was so drunk he forgot to put the candle out. Teichmann went in and closed the door behind him. The draught blew the candle out, but he had already seen Heyne hanging by the wall opposite the door, where the bookshelf had been.

He lit a match. Heyne had hanged himself with a sword belt. He had passed the free end through the buckle; then he had burnt a hole in the strap and fastened it to the big nail from which the bookshelf had hung. It was good German pre-war leather; the hole had scarcely been stretched

when Heyne, standing on the bookshelf, had put his head in the noose and kicked the shelf away.

Because Heyne had been a suicide, there was no pastor at the funeral. Heyne's house was confiscated. Teichmann packed up all his personal belongings, mostly books, and sent them to the professor's brother, a retired general living in Nienstedten. All he kept for himself was the buckle of the belt with which Heyne had hanged himself. The words "God be with us" were inscribed on it. He put it in his trouser-pocket. Then he took the train for Gotenhafen, where he was to take an officer's training course at the Submarine School.

CHAPTER 6

U⁻³⁷² PUT OUT on her last patrol.

The captain had asked for and obtained Teichmann as second lieutenant. Petersen was the new first lieutenant. He still spoke softly, because of the splinter in his throat. But in speaking to the captain, he exerted himself and his voice rasped like a file. Herling was still chief engineer. His rumpled hair had turned grey, and that lent him a certain air of dignity. Otherwise, he was still the same. Of those who had cracked up on Teichmann's last patrol, only Arndt remained. He had missed one patrol, but now he was back again. Schmidt was in a sanatorium. Weissenstein was dead; no details were known.

During Teichmann's term at the Submarine School, the boat had survived an eighty-day patrol in the North Atlantic. She had undergone no fewer than forty-two air attacks. She had battled fog and icebergs. Teichmann, standing on the bridge, in a fitful wet spring wind, considered the absurdity of this kind of warfare. Out of five submarines, three or four were regularly lost, and few enemy ships were sunk. Yet those that returned soon went out again. Bitterness rose up in him over this inhuman obstinacy. It was not the fear of death—that was bad enough, but everyone was resigned to it—but rather the senselessness of dying in this way.

There is no country in the world, thought Teichmann as the rain dripped down on him, where men are so docile about dying; and they call it bravery. The propagandists in Berlin boasted that the fighting spirit of the submarine fleet was unbroken. And that was true. But Teichmann began to doubt whether this was anything to boast of. It

struck him now as a perverted kind of courage. And what if it were mere stupidity?

The Bay of Biscay gave them a harsh reception. It drove over the boat with its mountainous seas, green and black and gleaming white at the summits. For a moment the waters released the steel tube, only to seize it again, shaking it, stamping on it, sweeping the four look-outs from the bridge. Because of the weather, the sky was empty of planes, and any submarine chasers that might have been patrolling those waters could congratulate themselves if they didn't capsize.

The radio direction-finder jammed, and Bolz, the telegraphist, fell overboard as he was trying to repair it. A torpedo started to roll and crushed the arms of Leading Seaman Brenk. And just before the captain dived so that his arms could be set—yes, Lüttke was getting softhearted in his old age—E.R.A. Hübler reported that the port engine was out of commission.

Twenty-five fathoms down, the storm was unnoticeable. There was peace and quiet to set Brenk's arms while the stokers were working on the diesel. They removed various parts of the engine and cursed because they could not agree on how to repair it, and the seamen who were trying to set Brenk's arms argued about the best way to go about it without driving the poor fellow mad with pain.

When the captain had got fed up with Brenk's screaming, Petersen and Teichmann took over and set the crushed bones, using two slats from the potato-locker for splints.

Two hours had passed. The port engine had been taken almost completely apart. Another hour later Herling informed the captain that the engine could not be repaired with the materials available on board; the camshafts were broken. Sabotage.

Lüttke sent off a wireless signal and ordered the quartermaster to steer for home. But in his rage he made a mistake: when he reached the rendezvous point he went straight on instead of waiting for the escort ships to arrive.

The submarine crawled homeward submerged, at a rate of two knots. Some of the crew, particularly the married men, were not the least bit dismayed over this turn of events. All those who had time went to the engine-room for a look at the dismembered engine. Uninvited, the stokers gave their comments, pointing here and there with their grease-blackened

arms, and feeling very important. The seamen made disparaging remarks about the stokers. The chief engineer stood by. In his great hands he held the parts of a broken camshaft, which he examined gloomily, muttering and shaking his head. Those who were close enough to him could make out the words "They've been sawed." And those words rang in the seamen's ears even after they had left the engine-room. They knew that the newly installed engine had been destroyed by the enemy, an invisible enemy—in Germany. That upset them, but they showed no sign of it. "It won't take long to mend," they said. "Of course, those fellows in the dry dock will do it in no time. Those stokers of ours are so clueless. . . ."

Suddenly all life froze in the boat.

Everyone heard the sound—a metal object out there in the water, scraping against the starboard side.

No one moved—or even breathed. Out there, scarcely a yard away, steel struck steel and every single man heard it. Death had laid his bony hand on the hull. As it passed, the men's eyes followed as though an unknown commander were passing them in review. It had started behind the forward hydroplane, and now it was moving slowly, slowly along the side.

The captain spoke. "Hard astarboard," he commanded, hoping to clear the after hydroplane. But the quartermaster didn't have time to carry out the order,

The mine exploded next to the motor-compartment. It tore open the pressure hull and killed the men in the motor-room and the engine-room, and the cook in the galley, and some of the men in the petty-officers' mess. In less than three seconds all these rooms were flooded. Petersen slammed and bolted the after watertight door; the rest of the men in the petty-officers' mess were drowned.

It was completely black in the boat and she stood vertical in the water; the men forward and in the control-room fell off their feet and rolled down to the watertight door where Petersen lay, his lower jaw smashed. Then a dull thud was heard as U-372 struck bottom, and settled on an even keel.

A torch went on. The captain held it, directing the beam on the depth-indicator in the control-room. The blinding light remained in place much longer than was necessary for reading the indicator. And then again total

darkness. The needle of the depth-indicator stood at two hundred and twenty-five feet.

The silence was complete, both inside and outside the boat. There was something unearthly about that silence, as though everything that had ever lived had gone out of existence. Never had the men's ears heard anything like that silence.

The captain stood leaning over the chart-table; the coxswain held the light for him. Lüttke's left hand was bleeding, and the coxswain's temple had been bruised. On the other side of the room Teichmann made out Melchert, the control-room petty officer, in the half-darkness. He was standing motionless by the main valve of the blowing system, he had his hands on the wheel and was waiting for the command to blow out the tanks. The captain and the coxswain were also motionless. Teichmann was reminded of the tableaux that he had once seen at an evening entertainment as a child. The ladies and gentlemen had stood just as still, but their poses had been deliberately theatrical.

"Hey, you," said Teichmann to Melchert. "What are you hanging on to that wheel for?"

"Mr. Teichmann," said the captain, "must you always make so much noise?"

When Melchert let go of the wheel he squatted like a little girl on a kerbstone, and then he sat down. Another break-down, Teichmann thought, and he laughed three or four times. His laugh was short, dry, and unnaturally loud.

"What was that?" the captain asked. He turned round and looked at Teichmann. "Aren't you feeling well?"

"I'm feeling fine, sir," said Teichmann. But he felt like crawling through the deck.

Only the coxswain could see what the captain was doing at the chart-table, and he said nothing. He held the light in such a way that it fell only on the captain; his own face was in darkness, as was every other living face on board. Most of the men huddled on the control-room deck and did nothing, and the strange part of it was that they seemed quite content. Every bit of life in them was concentrated on watching their captain's back.

Teichmann looked round for Herling. He had been trapped in the engine-room with his sabotaged camshaft; the wonderful, ugly fellow

was gone. Teichmann forgot him at once and looked at the others. He wondered how they managed to breathe so silently; it seemed to him that he himself was wheezing as though each breath were his last.

He regulated his breathing and then his brain began to speak up. What it told him was this: First, the boat is lying on the bottom; second, she can't rise; third, you are shut up inside. That was all his brain told him.

The silence was unbroken. And now that everything round them had ceased to live, they realized that they were no longer afraid. They looked into one another's faces and suddenly knew more about one another than in all the years spent fighting side by side. The fighting was over now. They lay at the bottom of the sea, in the place to which they had sent so many enemy ships, the place where all ships ultimately go.

Never had they been less afraid. Their minds and bodies had grown used to fear as you get used to a job. Death could not have come more easily, more peacefully or pleasantly. There was something splendid, almost luxurious, about this kind of death. They knew how evil death could be, with what subtle cruelty it could strike, promiscuously and unjustly, and now it had come so gently. They had learned long ago that the main thing in war is the way death comes, not the mere fact of death. They saw no ground for complaint. They had known it would come one day; it was easy to work it out, and secretly they had done so. Now they found it perfectly acceptable. Even the boundless silence round them was soothing. No more depth-charges, the war was over, they had made their peace. This was how they felt when the captain said, "Stand by to leave the boat."

The captain had spoken in the same tone as he had used hundreds of times to command, "Stand by for surfacing." But the men cowered as though he were holding a club over them.

"It's perfectly simple. We have plenty of time, and there's no need to hurry. We have plenty of escape gear. So it's all perfectly simple. I shall explain everything in detail. Anyone who has questions may ask them. Incidentally, the depth presents no problem. . . ."

The men did not listen. They understood nothing. They gaped at him like bewildered children. As he spoke, he kept his injured hand in his trouser-pocket, and he tried hard to make his expression friendly and reassuring. The coxswain held the light on him.

The captain broke off. He saw that he was not understood and his face

changed. His lips became lines and his eyes turned to slits. He climbed up into the tower. They heard him undogging the hatch cover, pushing back the catch. Then he climbed down and said, "Get your escape gear ready. Number one, stand by to flood tube three."

The men jumped as if they had been sitting on a hot stove. Teichmann despised them for a moment, and then he himself was afraid of what was to come. At Submarine School he had learned something about escaping from submerged boats.

"Do you understand me, Number One?"

Petersen went towards the captain but said nothing.

"Do you understand?"

Petersen was now standing right in front of the captain. He made no sound but shook his head and pointed at his throat. When he opened his mouth a bit it could be seen that his front teeth were missing, and the captain nodded. He understood that the first lieutenant was unable to speak.

There were twenty-one survivors. The captain told them that they would not have to swim very long; they were on the route regularly taken by the flotilla and the escort vessels in and out of La Pallice; possibly they would even see the Ile de Ré with the naked eye; they were only a little way from the harbour entrance.

This time they listened. And after he had explained how the tower-hatch could be opened in spite of the high pressure, they were convinced that escape was a relatively simple matter even at this depth. They went forward for their escape gear and hurried back to the control-room.

The captain divided them into three groups of seven. The first group would be led by Teichmann because the first lieutenant was partially disabled, the second by the coxswain, and the last by the captain himself.

At 0800 the flooding began.

Teichmann went alone into the forward torpedo-compartment. For a few seconds he remained hesitant in the darkness, as if to think the whole thing over one last time. He looked towards the tubes, where the water would stream into the boat; and he suddenly realized that he was starting a process that could not be reversed. Then he looked back into the control-room. A few of his shipmates, themselves illumined by a torch, were peering after him, unable to see him in the darkness.

He opened the bow-cap of tube three. Then he let compressed air into

the tube and fired the torpedo. He could hear it bouncing along the bottom and waited for all to be still. Then he closed the bow-cap and opened the rear door, and then removed the piston from the tube. For reasons of safety the tube was so constructed that the bow-cap could not be opened when the rear door was open. He closed the rear door, then he opened the bow-cap a little, and then quickly reopened the rear door.

The water poured in with the shrill note of a steam whistle, which deepened to an ear-shattering howl. He ran back to the control-room. The captain stood by the forward door, holding the torch for him.

For the first time the men were seized by a kind of panic. They moved together like a herd of frightened animals, fingering their escape gear, breathing as if they had just completed a cross-country run.

Lüttke switched off his torch. The gush of water sounded hideously loud in the darkness. But above it the words of the captain could be heard: "Don't be afraid of the water, you fellows." Then he shone the light from face to face. The men were too frightened to move a muscle. When the light went out, the howling of the water was twice as loud as before.

Each group was tied together with a line slung round their waists in case anyone should lose his nerve and rise too quickly. The group that was to go first stood in a circle under the control-room hatch; the second and third groups stood behind them. But when the water reached the lower edge of the control-room door and rushed into the control-room, they squeezed together and tugged at the lines; and a few fell down screaming.

The water rose quickly. When it was knee-high, the captain had to switch on his torch while the lines were being disentangled. Just then a scream was heard from the forward torpedo-compartment. A second wave of panic came over the men. They had never heard anyone howl like that.

They knew that it was too late to close the tube and that Brenk, the man with the crushed arms, had been forgotten. The captain realized that he had been to blame; he forced his way through the half-submerged gangway and, up to his hips in water, waded through the ward-room and the petty-officers' mess into the forward torpedo-compartment. Teichmann was barely able to follow him. Brenk was lying in one of the upper bunks. They lifted him up. He was still screaming. Teichmann

laid him over his shoulder, picked up the nearest available escape gear, and carried it in his teeth. The captain went first, lighting the way. To get back through the gangway they had to dive, but they managed to get Brenk through. In the control-room they adjusted his escape gear and instructed him to follow Teichmann, who would unscrew his oxygen bottle. Then they tied him to the line between Teichmann and Petersen.

"Do the potatoes float? Go on, throw one in the water," cried the captain when the water was chest-high and flowing over the potato locker. The water was already up to the necks of the smaller men, and they adjusted their nose-clips. There was pure terror in their eyes. "If they sink, they're fresh," said the captain. Now they had all put on their nose-clips. Through the din of the onrushing water, the whistling of the oxygen could be heard as the men tested the valves. They tested the valves about every ten seconds. "If they float," said the captain, "they're old potatoes."

"That's only true of eggs," said Teichmann, and those were the last words spoken.



They pulled the goggles over their eyes. The captain put his torch in his mouth and leaned his head back so that the light would shine as long as possible. Some of the men grimaced and reeled because of the pressure on their ears. The rising water had pressed all the remaining air into the tower-hatch. They waited for the air pressure to open the lid of their coffin.

When the light went out, Teichmann put the mouthpiece between Brenk's lips and opened his oxygen bottle. Then he did the same for himself. Almost at the same time there was a peal of thunder and then the whole boat was full of water. Teichmann had almost bitten through the mouthpiece of his escape gear. The tower-hatch was open. There was no more air in the boat.

But the escape gear functioned. Teichmann breathed gingerly; he didn't dare breathe deeply, because he was afraid he might suddenly find himself breathing water. The first breaths tasted of cold rubber and copper, but then the only taste was oxygen, and the breathing was easier than he had thought it would be.

He felt a tug on the line and realized that Petersen was drowning. He had seen him gagging, unable to hold the mouthpiece between his lips, massaging his throat. A quiver went through Petersen, and his hands moved convulsively. Then he lay down slowly on the control-room deck—all movements are slow in the water. It was as if he were tired and wanted to sleep.

Teichmann had to untie him. He bent over and found the knot, but it had pulled tight when Petersen sank down and he couldn't undo it. Teichmann needed all his nerve to take his knife from his trouser-pocket and open the long blade. He was frantic to get out of the boat as quickly as possible. He cut the line and tied the loose ends together. He hadn't the strength to close his knife and put it away. He simply let it drop and groped for the rungs of the ladder.

He found them at once. Slowly he climbed up into the tower, taking care not to damage his escape gear and life-jacket. He drew Brenk after him and, with the help of the leading seaman, who was now third in line, he passed Brenk through the conning-tower hatch to the bridge.

Up there he waited in the darkness. With one hand he held fast to the periscope standard and waited for the rest of his group. He was surprised to realize that there should still be oxygen in his cylinder; he

expected it to run out at any moment. He held his hand over the hatch and felt for the heads of the men. When they came, he gripped them by the hair and pulled gently to let them know he was there and waiting for them. And each time he touched a man, he felt lighter, as though stripped of a weight. He took each man by the arm and directed him to the place behind the periscope. Two of them clapped him on the shoulder in passing.

When his group was all assembled, he felt better. He opened Brenk's oxygen bottle and his own a little more and felt himself floating. He gave three tugs at the line as a sign that they were going to rise, and felt the others passing the signal along. Then he lost his sense of direction.

Everything round him was liquid and soft and there was nothing to hold on to. But the line was still there. When he looked up, the water was dark green. He let air bubbles out of his mouth in order to slow down the rise, and at once the line tautened; the others had got ahead of him. Without knowing what he was doing, he let more air out of his mouth. The line grew rigid and pulled him into a slanting position. Then it occurred to him that he had used too much oxygen and that there would be none left in his tank with which to blow up his life-jacket. He flailed about with his legs, trying to rise faster, but the line remained taut. He opened the oxygen bottle again, the line slackened, and the water round him became light green. For fear that his lungs might burst, he let out some more air bubbles. The line tautened. He had a feeling that the others were already on top.

Suddenly he was able to think calmly and clearly, and he knew it. He also knew that it would be best for his lungs if he rose as slowly as possible; but his sense of time had abandoned him completely. He couldn't say whether a minute or half an hour had passed since he had left the boat; he only knew that the oxygen in the cylinder was supposed to be enough for half an hour if you breathed sparingly. At this thought he began to make swimming movements. Then he saw dark spots.

He could see clearly above him and thought the spots might be jelly-fish. He was so frightened that a tremor ran through his entire body. He had read somewhere that masses of jelly-fish could burn off your skin and kill you if you came into contact with them. He beat wildly round him, tugging at the line, which was still taut, and kicking. He mustn't rise now. There were large jelly-fish above him.

He felt ice-cold. Up until then he hadn't noticed how cold the water was, but now it bit into his body and he shivered. The dark spots had grown larger. They were straight above him.

He counted them and reached six. Then he felt ashamed and exasperated. He had been behaving like an idiot.

He made more swimming movements, a kind of breast stroke with a crawl kick, and suddenly he saw the sky and his shipmates. The skin of their faces was grey. He closed the breathing valves, took out the mouthpiece, opened the oxygen cylinder full, and felt the life-jacket filling and pressing against the back of his neck. He felt miserably cold.

"All correct!" he heard someone calling. He tore off his goggles, got a noseful, and spluttered. Now the men's faces looked red. One of them must have opened Brenk's bottle; Brenk's life-jacket was full.

"All correct, sir."

"All correct."

"All correct."

"All correct."

And then they all shouted again, "All correct." They repeated the cry like parrots, and then, when seven heads popped out of the water close by, they called again, "All correct." Teichmann called out too. The coxswain and his men called back. They bobbed up and down in the swell and cried out as though toasting one another. Then, shivering miserably, they waited for the next seven.

The coxswain swam over to Teichmann and joined their lines.

"There are fourteen of us, sir. The others are coming."

"Oh, yes, they're coming."

"Where's number one?"

"Couldn't make it. His throat."

"Hell. Of all the rotten luck!"

The captain bobbed up with his six men. "All correct!" called the newcomers in chorus. They were greeted on all sides. It sounded like a gaggle of clucking geese.

"Where's number one?"

"He couldn't keep the mouthpiece in, sir."

"Damn stupid business! Why do they send me such men? The poor fellow deserved a desk job. I'm going to tell the admiral that. Those pen pushers in Kiel will have this man on their conscience. The twisters—

once a month they turn their hotel ship round at the pier, and that entitles them to sea-going pay. That's the sort they are, Teichmann."

"Yes, sir."

"Damn cold, eh?"

"Yes, sir, it's getting chilly."

That was the end of the colloquy between Luttke and Teichmann. Each turned back to his own worries. There was no sign of the *Ile de Ré*. Apart from water and twenty-one heads, there was nothing to be seen at all.

They were all joined by lines now. They had formed a circle and were waiting for something that didn't come. Some had begun to turn blue in the face.

The sun warmed their heads, but from the neck down they were frozen. They felt that a crust of ice was forming round them. When they moved, the crust grew thinner. But when they stopped moving, their limbs grew heavy and numb.

About noon the first of them began to give up. They wanted to sleep. They tried in vain. It wouldn't work. When they laid their heads against the cushions of their life-jackets, the water washed into their mouths and noses—the sea was moderately rough—and when they threw their heads back, the sun shone into their eyes. It was straight overhead and very white. So there was nothing to do for the present but to go on living; the sea kept them awake.

The captain shouted a few words of encouragement, but only the leading seaman, a particularly tough customer, reacted. He even managed to sing a song. The song was about the most obscene that had ever struck Teichmann's ears.

"If you must sing," said the captain, "can't you sing something a little more decent?"

Teichmann felt the sea slowly killing him. He kicked at it with his feet, and now and then counted the dancing heads. His watch was watertight. It said 1400 when the gulls came. Teichmann knew that the gulls went for the eyes of helpless survivors. Warm eyes in human brine. He knew what they were after. He watched them coming as a paralytic left alone in a burning house watches the fire. And at that moment something snapped inside him.

The others were glad to see something alive. For them the gulls were

a distraction, their red feet neatly parallel under their white plumage, the under-sides of their wings shimmering a steely-blue in the sun. Teichmann wanted to call out to his shipmates, to warn them, but he felt that his head had been parted from his body, that the connexion between him and his head had been broken.

The strange part of it was that Teichmann knew he was mad, just as a drunken man knows he is drunk. But that didn't trouble him. He started calling out to the gulls, though not a sound issued from his mouth. He was crying like a little boy. He saw the shadows of the gulls on the water. He struck at them. He struck the water with his fists like a child trying to swim. But the shadows were not concerned with him, and he could not chase after them. . . .

AT DUSK two patrol boats found the twenty-one men and fished nine of them out of the water alive. The gulls had shown them the way.





Wolfgang Ott

WOLFGANG OTT was barely seventeen when he was called into the German naval service at the beginning of the Second World War. Like Hans Teichmann in *Sharks and Little Fish*, he served first as a seaman in a minesweeper and later as an officer in submarines, surviving almost six years of extremely hazardous duty. After the war he tried to support himself as a lumberman and a musician before he found that his real talents lay in the field of journalism.

Sharks and Little Fish is his first novel. Enormously successful in Germany, it has been hailed there as the most powerful and outspoken novel to come out of the war.

Mr. Ott, who lives in Stuttgart in West Germany, is now at work on his second novel. Like many ex-naval men, he spends much of his leisure yachting.

d. b. 1884



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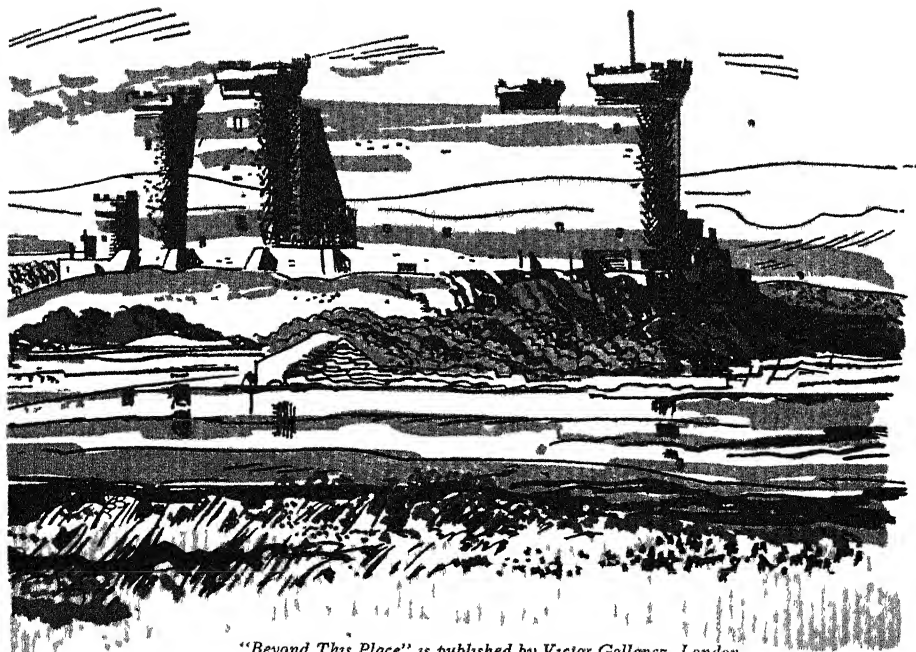


Illustrations by Isa Barnett

This Place

A condensation of the book by

A. J. CRONIN



"Beyond This Place" is published by Victor Gollancz, London

A. J. CRONIN's exciting novel, *Beyond This Place*, is the story of a young man in a terrifying situation. Alone and penniless in a strange city, Paul Mathry was desperately determined to prove that his father had been unjustly convicted of a horrible murder. But somewhere in the city, he knew, were powerful people equally determined that he should not unravel the past: people who sent him threats and warnings, who set the machinery of the law in motion against him, who left him with no allies except the mysterious Lena—a girl with a dark secret of her own.

Beyond This Place illustrates the author's belief that the courts can sometimes work terrible injustice to innocent men. Rich in drama, full of memorable characters, and with an unusual love story, it is A. J. Cronin at his story-telling best.

"A fine novel in the grand manner."

—Joseph Taggart in *The Star*



CHAPTER 1

ON Wednesday evenings Paul's mother took the tram from her work in the City Hall to the midweek service at Merrion Chapel and he usually walked over from the University, after his five o'clock philosophy class, to meet her as she came out. But on this particular Wednesday, his interview with Professor Slade kept him late and he decided to go straight home.

It was June, and the lovely expectant evening had imposed a spell upon the begrimed buildings of Belfast. Framed against the amber sky, the roofs and chimney stacks of the northern Irish city lost their prosaic outlines and became mysterious, resplendent as a city in a dream.

As Paul came up Larne Road where he lived with his mother in a three-room flat, a surge of elation took hold of him. He felt suddenly the breath-taking beauty and promise of life. Standing for a moment at his door, an unassuming young man, bareheaded, in a worn tweed suit, he filled his lungs with the soft, still air. Then, briskly, he turned and put his latchkey in the lock.

The canary was singing in the kitchen. Whistling to the bird, he put the kettle on to boil and began to see about supper. A few minutes later the clock on the mantelpiece struck seven, and he heard his mother's step. He greeted her gaily as she came in, a spare and enduring figure clad in respectable black, bent a little to one side by her indispensable "hold-all" bag.

"Sorry I couldn't get to chapel, Mother," he smiled, "but Professor Slade's given me the job of teaching in the summer school. At least, I'm almost sure of it."

Mrs. Burgess studied him. The impression of weariness created by her lined features and intent, nearsighted eyes melted gradually under his frank and cheerful gaze. It was, she thanked God, a good face, open and straight-featured; cheekbones too prominent but with a healthy complexion, clear, very light grey eyes, and a broad forehead set off by close-cropped brown hair.

"I'm glad it's settled, son. I knew you'd have good reason for not coming. But Ella and Mr. Fleming missed you." Emmanuel Fleming, pastor of Merrion Chapel, was their oldest friend.

She brought from her satchel some cold ham wrapped in wax paper and a bag of his favourite wheaten scones. They sat down and when she had asked the blessing, began their simple meal. He saw that, despite her restraint, she was deeply pleased.

"It is a stroke of luck, Mother. Three guineas a week. And for the whole nine weeks of my holidays."

"God is very good to you, Paul."

He remarked: "I'm to send my birth certificate to Slade tonight."

There was a pause. Head bent, she took her spoon and removed a tea leaf floating in her cup. Her voice was a little indistinct.

"What do they want with a birth certificate?"

"Oh, a pure formality," he answered lightly. "They won't engage students under twenty-one. I'd some difficulty in persuading Slade that I came of age last month."

"You mean he wouldn't take your word?"

He looked across in sharp surprise.

"Mother! That was a little uncalled-for. The man's only obeying the regulations."

Mrs. Burgess did not answer, and Paul, when he had finished his tea, rose from the table. Only then did his mother stir.

"Paul," she detained him, unexpectedly, "I'm . . . I'm not sure, after all . . . that I like this idea."

"What!" he exclaimed. "Why, for weeks we've both been hoping I'd go."

"It means your being away from me." She hesitated and again looked down. "You'll miss our week's holiday with the Flemings. Ella will be disappointed. It will be too much for you."

"Nonsense, Mother. You worry about nothing." Before she could

protest further, he went to fill in the application in his own room.

"Will you get the certificate for me now, Mother?" he said when he returned to the living-room. "I want to catch the nine o'clock post."

She was still seated at the table where he had left her. Her face seemed flushed, her voice pitched in an unusual key.

"I scarcely know where it is. It's not a thing you can put your hands on at a moment's notice."

"Oh, come, Mother." His glance flew to the chest where she kept all her papers. "It must be in your top drawer."

She gazed back at him, her mouth slightly open. Then, rising, she took a key from her purse, and unlocked the top drawer of the chest. She searched methodically for five minutes, then shut the drawer and turned round.

"No," she said, in an expressionless manner, "I can't find it. It isn't there."

He bit his lip in annoyance. "Really, Mother, it's an important document. And I need it."

"How was I to know you needed it?" Her voice trembled with sudden resentment. "These things get lost. You know the struggle I've had, left a widow all these years, bringing you up, worrying half the time whether I could keep a roof over our heads, let alone educate you properly. I can tell you I've had enough to do without bothering about a few papers."

This outburst, altogether foreign to her controlled nature, took him aback. In a quiet tone, he said:

"Fortunately it's possible to get a duplicate. By writing to Somerset House in London. I'll do it tonight."

She made a gesture of negation. Her voice was calmer now.

"It's not your place to write, Paul. I'll send for it tomorrow."

DURING the next two days Paul was fully engaged, as Queen's University was breaking up for the long vacation. Once or twice his thoughts reverted to the recent scene with his mother and, watching her, he thought she seemed paler than usual, given to moods of queer abstraction. Of course, she had always been a highly strung woman—he recollected how, in their early days in Belfast, a sudden knock on the door would make her start. But this was different: now a consuming anxiety seemed pressed upon her brow. On Thursday morning he asked her if she had

received an answer from Somerset House. She replied simply: "No."

There could be nothing wrong. Yet he was puzzled, and began to seek an explanation of her behaviour in his own past history.

The first five years of his life he had spent in the North of England, in Tynecastle. This was a blurred background lit by the glowing recollection of his father, a gay and incomparably friendly figure, who on Sundays took him by the hand to Jesmond Dene to sail little paper boats on the pond; who, when he was tired, seated him upon a park bench in the shade and made wonderful sketches of everything around; and who on weekdays brought him home coloured marzipan fruits, delicious to admire and eat, made by the confectionery firm which employed him as travelling salesman.

After Paul's fifth birthday they had moved to the great Midland city of Wortley: a greyer and less happy memory, mingled with smoke and rain and moving about, the glare of steel foundries and the moody faces of his parents, climaxed by the departure of his father on a business trip to South America. There was the suspense of waiting for his return, and then the unimaginable grief on hearing of his death in a railway disaster near Buenos Aires.

Not yet six years old, he had come to Belfast. Here, through the good offices of Emmanuel Fleming, his mother had found work in the City Health Department. The salary was small, but it had enabled the widow, by some miracle of economy and self-denial, to educate her son for the teaching profession.

It had seemed to Paul that the very intensity of his mother's effort constricted their life in Belfast to the narrowest limits. She barely knew their next-door neighbours. Pastor Fleming and Ella apart, she had no intimates. She had even frowned upon his own friendships at the University. When, a year before, he had been invited to play in the international Rugby game between Ireland and England, she had positively refused to allow him to accept.

In the past he had credited his mother's protectiveness mainly to her extreme and watchful piety. But now, in the light of her present conduct, he wondered if there were not another cause. Considering the quiet pattern of her existence, its shrinking from all contacts, he saw it, with a start of apprehension, as the life of one who has something to conceal.

On Saturday, which was her half-holiday, she came in from her work at two o'clock. By this time he had made up his mind to have the matter out with her. Her appearance really startled him: her face was quite grey. But she seemed composed.

"Have you had lunch, son?"

"I had a sandwich at the Union."

There was a pause, then he straightened himself, tensely grasping the arms of his chair.

"Mother, we can't go on like this. There's something wrong. Tell me, did you get that certificate this morning?"

"No, son. I didn't. I didn't even write for it."

The blood rushed to his face. "Why not?"

"Because I had it all the time. It's here now, in my bag." She fumbled in her satchel and brought out a blue-grey paper. "All these years I've fought to keep it from you, Paul. At first every step on the stairs made me tremble. Then, as the years went on, I fancied with the help of God I had won through. But it was not His will. The pastor says you are a man now. You must know the truth."

Her agitation had increased with every word. Her hand quivered as she held out the paper to him. In a daze he looked at it, and saw immediately that the name there was not his. Instead of *Paul Burgess* he read, *Paul Mathry*.

He looked from the paper to her. "What does it mean?"

"When we came here I took my maiden name of Burgess. I am Mrs. Rees Mathry, you are Paul Mathry. But I wanted to forget that name." Her lips twitched. "I wanted you to be out of sight and sound of it for ever."

"Why?"

She threw him a despairing glance and began to weep. Without looking at him she said:

"Your father did not die on a trip to South America. He was trying to get there when the police arrested him."

Of all things that he had expected this was the last. His heart bounded into his throat. "For what?" he faltered.

"For murder."

There was a stillness in the little room. Paul's question came in a whisper:

"Then . . . he was hanged."

She shook her head, her eyes filmed with hatred.

"Better for us if he had been. He was sentenced to death . . . then reprieved. He is a life convict in Stoneheath Prison."

He saw that it was torture for her to proceed.

"Don't force me to go on, son. Mr. Fleming promised me he'd tell you everything. Go to him. He expects you now."

CHAPTER 2

PASTOR FLEMING's house stood in the busy heart of Belfast. In answer to Paul's knock the hall light was turned on and Ella Fleming admitted him.

"Come along in, Paul," she said. "Father's with a parishioner but he won't be long."

Ella was two years older than Paul, yet she had a somewhat girlish air. Her eyes, of a greyish green, were large and expressive—but on occasion they could fill with tears and spark with temper, too. She was naturally talkative, and keeping house for her widowed father had given her a certain social assurance.

She showed him to the parlour, a low-ceilinged room, with dark-red curtains and horsehair furnishings.

"I'll tell Father you're here," she said.

She went out of the room and a moment later Emmanuel Fleming appeared. He was a man of about fifty, with thick shoulders and big clumsy hands. With meaningful affection, he took Paul by the arm, and led him to his study. Having seated his visitor, the pastor took his own place slowly at the desk. He hesitated for some time, then began:

"My dear boy, this has been a frightful shock to you. But the great thing to remember is that it is God's will. With His help you'll get over it."

Paul swallowed dryly.

"I can't get over it till I know something about it."

There was a silence. Pastor Fleming rested his elbow on the desk, shading his eyes with his big hand, as though engaged in inward prayer for help. He spoke in a troubled tone:

"Twenty-two years ago, Paul, in Tynecastle, I married Rees Mathry

to Hannah Burgess. Hannah I had known for some years. Rees I did not know, but he was a well-mannered, engaging man. I had every reason to believe them happy, especially when you were born to them."

He paused, as though weighing his words with care.

"I will not deny, however, that there were rifts in the harmony of the home. Your mother was strictly religious; she was firmly set against the use of wine and tobacco in the house—a prejudice your father could never fully understand. Again, your father's work frequently took him away from home which had, perhaps, an unsettling influence upon him. He was a handsome, likeable fellow and he made friends of whom one could not always approve. Still, I had nothing serious against him until the terrible events of the year 1921."

He sighed and pressed his thick finger tips together.

"In January of '21 your parents moved with you to Wortley. A few months previously, I had been transferred to Belfast, but I still kept in touch with your mother by correspondence. Your life in Wortley was, from the first, unsettled. Your father seems to have resented his removal by the company to a district which appeared to offer him less scope. Wortley is a grey, unprepossessing city and your mother never liked it. They could not find a suitable house and occupied a succession of furnished rooms. Suddenly, in September, on the ninth of that month, to be precise, your father announced that he had reached the end of his patience. He proposed to throw up his job and emigrate straight-away to the Argentine—there would be a better chance for all of you there. He booked three passages for the fifteenth of September. On the thirteenth he sent you and your mother to Liverpool in advance, to await him. Late on the night of the fourteenth he left Wortley by train to join you. But when he reached the Liverpool station the police were on the platform. After a violent struggle, he was arrested and lodged in gaol—the charge was wilful murder."

There was a long, tense pause. Paul, hunched in his chair, was like a hypnotized figure. Then the minister resumed:

"On the night of September 8th, between eight and eight ten p.m., Mona Spurling, an attractive young woman employed in a florist's shop was brutally murdered in the flat which she occupied at 52 Ushaw Terrace in Eldon, a near suburb of Wortley. Returning from work, Miss Spurling had apparently eaten a light meal, then changed into a *négligé*,

in which she was found. At eight o'clock a man named Albert Prusty in the flat below heard sounds of violence coming through the ceiling and went up to investigate. He knocked loudly on the door but received no answer. He was standing on the landing when a young man named Edward Collins came up the stairway to deliver a package of laundry. Just as Collins joined him, the door opened, a man came out of the Spurling apartment, brushed past them, and dashed down the stairs. They hastened into the sitting-room, where they found Miss Spurling, her head almost severed from her body, stretched on the hearthrug in a pool of blood.

"Immediately, Mr. Prusty ran for the nearest doctor. He came at once, quite uselessly, since Miss Spurling was already dead. The police were sent for, and within a few hours three clues came to light. Detective-Inspector Swann discovered in the bureau a pencil-sketched picture post-card posted only a week before from Sheffield, which bore the following words: *Absence makes the heart grow fonder. Won't you meet me for supper at Drury's when I return?* It was signed *Bon-bon*.

"Also he found a note, partly destroyed, and unsigned, dated September 8th, which said: *'I must see you tonight.'* Finally, lying on the hearthrug beside the body was a peculiar money-bag made from a soft and unusually fine leather. It contained some ten pounds in silver and notes. Promptly, from particulars given by Edward Collins and Albert Prusty, a description of the wanted man was issued, offering a large reward for information leading to his apprehension.

"On the following day a local laundrywoman came to the police station with one of her ironers, a girl of seventeen named Louisa Burt. It appeared that Louisa, a friend of Edward Collins, the laundryman, had accompanied him to Ushaw Terrace on the night of the crime, and while waiting down in the alleyway had been bumped into and almost knocked down by a man running out of No. 52. She gave the police a description of this individual. The police had now three witnesses who had seen the murderer."

Pastor Fleming turned upon the young man his troubled gaze.

"It is not pleasant to touch on certain matters, Paul, but they are, alas, only too relevant. Mona Spurling was not a moral woman—she knew many men in her loose way. The other assistants in the flower shop where she worked recalled that Mona had recently seemed worried and low-

spirited, that she had been overheard at the telephone using such phrases as: 'You are responsible,' and 'If you leave me now I'll give the whole show away.' Finally, the post-mortem examination of the body revealed the unhappy fact that the murdered woman was pregnant. The motive was now established. When threatened with exposure, her lover had written to make an assignation, and had killed her.

"Reproductions of the sketched picture postcard signed *Bon-bon* were now displayed in all the newspapers. All railway stations and ports of embarkation were closely watched. Then, late on the evening of the thirteenth, a bookmaker's clerk named Harry Rocca sought out the Chief Constable and, in a state of considerable agitation, volunteered to make a statement. He confessed to an intimacy with the dead woman and stated that he knew the sender of the postcard—a friend with whom he often played billiards who had a marked talent for sketching. Sometime before he had introduced this man to Mona Spurling. Moreover, when the reproductions of the postcard appeared in the daily press his friend had asked him to back him up, saying: 'If anyone asks where I was on the night of September 8th, make out I was playing billiards with you.'

"That, of course, was enough. The Superintendent of Police immediately proceeded to the address which Rocca gave them. There they learned that the person they wanted had boarded the Liverpool express only an hour before. The arrest, at Liverpool, followed inevitably. The man, Paul, was your father."

Again there was silence. Then the minister went on:

"It so happened that Albert Prusty was confined to bed with asthma, but the two other witnesses were immediately taken to Liverpool. There, from a dozen assembled persons, they unhesitatingly picked out your father as the man they had seen on the night of the murder.

"The trial began on the 15th of December at Wortley. One after another, witnesses gave their damning evidence. Search of your father's trunks had resulted in discovery of a razor which medical experts for the Crown proved to be the instrument of the crime. A handwriting expert testified that the half-destroyed rendezvous note found in the murdered woman's flat had been written, left-handed, by your father. He had many times been seen in the florist's shop, laughing and chatting with Miss Spurling. The attempted flight to the Argentine and his vicious

resistance of the police, bore heavily against him. Most damning of all was his fatal attempt to establish a false abili with Rocca. And when he took the stand, he was a poor witness on his own behalf, contradicting himself, losing his temper, even shouting at the judge. He could not properly account for his movements at the hour of the crime, asserting that he had spent part of the evening at a cinema. But this pitiful excuse was riddled by the prosecuting counsel. Amid the darkness only one faint gleam shone in his favour. Albert Prusty, while admitting that your father resembled the man who ran from the flat, would not swear that he was the actual person. However, it came out that Prusty's eyesight was bad.

"The summing up of the judge, Mr. Justice Oman, went dead against the accused. The jury was absent only forty minutes. The verdict was 'Guilty.' Your father struggled and raved as the warders took him away.

"Although no one dared expect it, on the eve of the execution your father's sentence was commuted to life imprisonment and he was removed to Stoneheath Prison."

Paul wiped his forehead with the handkerchief crumpled in his damp hand. "No one has seen him . . . since he went in there?"

The minister sighed deeply.

"At first I tried to keep in touch with him through the prison chaplain but he met my advances with such resentment, even ferocity, that I was forced to discontinue them. As for your mother, she judged it better to obliterate this awful chapter from your life. Unfortunately, she has not succeeded. Now I want you to cleanse your mind of the matter. You must go forward as though all that I have told you had never been."

A WEEK had passed since the interview in Fleming's study. It was Sunday afternoon, and the Scripture class Paul taught at Merriion Chapel was over. Ella stood waiting for Paul to join her. Usually, before their regular Sunday stroll, Paul would sit down at the little organ and play for her—he had more than average talent—but today such a performance was beyond him. For that matter, he had little wish to go walking, and as they passed through the gates of the park he muttered in a strained voice: "I'm not in the mood for this."

Ella looked vexed at this, but kept silent. Her affections had long been

centred upon him. Paul himself had drifted into the relationship out of careless good humour, but all Ella's plans for the future were based upon the certainty of their marriage. She was highly ambitious both for herself and for him, and the recent disclosure had been a severe injury to her pride. She saw also how great had been the shock for Paul. Yet if she was willing to get over it why should not he? A touch of grievance, even of annoyance, began to qualify her sympathy.

"It seems as if all these years I've been living under false pretences," he said, trying to give form to his tormenting thoughts. "I can't even call myself Burgess any more. But if I use the name Mathry, everywhere I go I'll imagine people whispering about me, 'That's Mathry, son of the man who—'"

"Don't, Paul," she interrupted. "You're making it too hard for yourself. No one need ever know."

"Even if they don't, I know. What about me . . . what am *I* going to do about it?"

Her patience was wearing thin. "It's perfectly simple. You must put away all thought of . . . this man Mathry."

He turned to her. "Disown my father?"

"Is he someone to be proud of?"

"Whatever he's done, he has paid for it . . . poor devil."

"I was only thinking of you," she answered sharply. "And kindly do not swear in my presence."

"I didn't say anything."

"You did." She could contain herself no longer. The blood rushed into her face. She snapped at him. "You used a word no lady would tolerate. I think you're behaving inexcusably." She drew up suddenly, overcome by her sense of injury.

"I'm afraid there's no point in our walking any farther."

He gazed at her numbly. "Just as you please."

Disconcerted at being taken at her word she swung round and moved off. When she was lost to view, he moved off slowly in the other direction.

He could not endure to return home. There he would find his mother awaiting him with anxious, unbearable solicitude. How strange was his new attitude to his mother! But stranger still, and more illogical, was the feeling towards his father. Here was the cause of all his misery: yet Paul could not hate him. Instead, his thoughts had flown towards him

with pity. Fifteen years in prison—was not that punishment enough for any man? Recollections of his childhood surged upon him. Tears blurred his vision.

He had now reached Donegal Quay, the dockside district of the city. Head down, he tramped along the cobbled wharves. An evening mist was stealing in from the sea, turning the tall pier derricks into spectral shapes.

At last, brought up by a barrier of merchandise piled between the sheds, he sat down on a packing-case. Immediately opposite, a small rusty freighter was making preparations for departure—he recognized her as the *Vale of Avoca*, a cross-channel steamer plying between Belfast and Holyhead in Wales.

A sudden excitement, strange and predestined, passed over Paul. Impulsively, he took out his note-book and scribbled two lines:

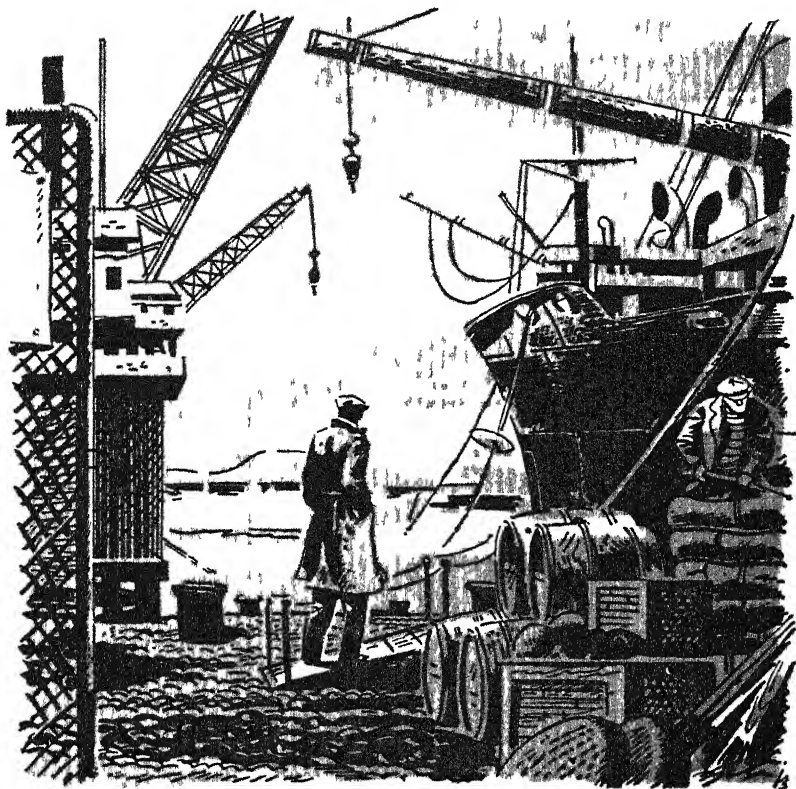
I am going away for a few days. Do not worry
Paul

He tore out the page, folded it over, and wrote his mother's name and address on the back. He found a boy to whom he gave the note with a coin to ensure delivery. Then he walked over to the shipping company's kiosk, and purchased a ticket for Holyhead. They were already casting off as he crossed the gangplank.

It was six o'clock next morning and raining heavily when the *Avoca* berthed at Holyhead. Stiff and chilled, Paul stepped ashore and crossed the tracks to the railway station. There was scarcely time for him to swallow a cup of tea in the refreshment-room before he caught the south-bound train.

Towards four o'clock in the afternoon, the train drew into the small moorland station that was his destination. He meant to ask the porter to direct him to the prison, but somehow the words thickened on his tongue; he passed through the white wicket in silence. However, once outside, he saw in the distance, across the rain-drenched earth, the great grey bulk of Stoneheath. He set off along the narrow road which wound across the moor.

At an incline on the path he leaned against a stunted birch tree to gain



his breath. Now he could discern the details of the prison: a great blank windowless square, pierced by a low portcullis, with watchtowers hovering like eagles at each corner, stern as a medieval fort. An unscalable wall, with spikes on the coping, enclosed the whole domain in which, like enormous wounds, three red stone quarries caught the eye. In one of these some prisoners were working, seen at that distance like grey ants, guarded by warders.

A sudden step behind him made him spin round. A shepherd had come up the hill, followed by a shaggy sheep dog.

"Not a pretty view," he remarked when he halted beside Paul.

"No." Paul spoke with an effort.

"It's a plague spot if ever there was one. Ay, even as we're talking here,

a guard in that tower has a pair of field glasses levelled on us, watching every move we make."

Paul forced himself to ask the question uppermost in his mind.

"When do they have visiting days?"

"Visiting days." The crofter looked at him with open derision. "There are no such days in Stoneheath."

Paul felt his heart contract. "But . . . the prisoner's relatives?"

The other said briefly: "No, not ever."

He whistled to his dog and, with a nod, was gone.

Paul remained motionless, all his sanguine expectations dashed to the ground. He could not see his father . . . could not even speak one word with him . . . what he had come to do was impossible.

Something broke within his breast. Torn by grief, pain, and frustration, he gave a wild inarticulate cry. Tears ran down his cheeks. He turned and made his way back blindly to the station.

CHAPTER 3

UPON the outskirts of the city of Wortley there stands Prusty's tobacco shop. This emporium has two windows, the one carrying a display of tobacco, the other an opaque blank—except for a small peephole showing the bench at which the proprietor makes by hand the cigarettes for which he is locally renowned.

Towards noon, on this June day, Mr. Prusty was, in fact, seated at his bench rolling out his special brand with a rapid and delicate touch. He was a skinny little man, past sixty, with a blunt porous nose and a choleric complexion, his straggling white moustache fumed with nicotine.

Perched on his stool, Mr. Prusty was watching a bareheaded young man who several times approached the shop, only to hesitate at the last moment and turn away. In the end, however, he seemed to muster all his will power. He crossed the street with a rush and came through the door. Mr. Prusty slowly got off his stool.

"Yes?" he inquired brusquely.

"I'd like to see Mr. Albert Prusty."

The tobacconist smiled. "I am Albert Prusty."

The young man took a deep determined breath.

"I am Paul Mathry." It was over. Once he had articulated that name a flood of relief suffused him. "Spelt M-a-t-h-r-y. Does the name convey anything to you?"

The cigarette maker's expression had not changed. He answered irritably: "I remember the Mathry case, if that's what you mean. But what the devil has it to do with you?"

"I am Rees Mathry's son."

Silence throbbed within the low-ceilinged shop.

"Why do you come to me?"

"I had to come." In broken phrases Paul made an effort to define the circumstances which had occasioned his trip to Stoneheath. He concluded: "I got in here this morning . . . there's a train out at nine this evening. I felt if only I could learn of something . . . perhaps some extenuating circumstance. I came to you . . . because you were the one favourable witness in all the case."

"What could I tell you?"

"I . . . I don't know." Paul sighed. He turned towards the door. "Well, I'll go now. Thank you for seeing me."

He was half-way out when a testy command drew him up short.

"Wait."

Paul came back slowly. Prusty stared him up and down. •

"You're in a devil of a hurry," said the tobacconist. "You pop up from nowhere, and rush in and out as though you'd come for a box of matches. Damn it all! You can't expect me to go back fifteen years in fifteen minutes."

Before Paul could reply, the shop bell sounded and a customer entered. The tobacconist addressed Paul in an undertone.

"The lunch hour is my busy time. Not that I've anything to say, but you can come up to my flat about half past seven. Fifty-two Ushaw Terrace in Eldon. It's still there. And so am I."

He went back to his customer. Paul left the shop, and made his way to the local Y.M.C.A., where he had a hot bath and ate lunch.

It was now only two o'clock. Paul pondered how he should use the time remaining before his appointment with Prusty. Suddenly an idea entered his mind. He made an inquiry at the desk, and after a ten-minute walk he was in the Public Library. He sought out the newspaper reference section.

"Could you give me the name of the most reputable Wortley newspaper?"

The young man behind the desk looked up pertly. "Probably the *Courier* is the best. It's quite dependable."

"Thank you. Could I see the files for the last four months of 1921?"

"Will you complete a form, please?"

"Of course." Paul filled in the slip and an attendant brought out a heavy folio and placed it on a table.

Paul began to turn the dry, yellowish sheets. There it was:

DASTARDLY OUTRAGE AT ELDON
YOUNG WOMAN BRUTALLY MURDERED

He controlled himself, and read steadily, with bent head, while the hands on the dome clock moved forward. In essence it was the story he had heard, but told with a more dramatic force. The speech of the Prosecutor, Matthew Sprott, cut him like a whip.

"This atrocious murder," he read, "was carried out by an abandoned ruffian in circumstances of savage ferocity which beggar description. The blackguard who committed this crime has sunk to the lowest depths of human degradation. Hanging, gentlemen of the jury, is too good for him."

In a special supplement, at the end of the last sheet, he found a page of photographs: the Prosecutor, the victim—a pretty, simpering young woman, wearing a beribboned blouse; the witnesses; the informer, Rocca, weak-faced, with slick hair plastered in a middle parting; the weapon—a German razor. And, in the centre of the page between two police officers, the condemned man. His father's face, bearing a hunted, sunken look, like a cornered animal, filled Paul with anguish.

Quickly he closed the file of newspapers. "Guilty! Guilty!" he muttered to himself. "Beyond the shadow of a doubt!"

He glanced at the clock and saw, with dull surprise, that it was nearly eight o'clock. He rose and carried the file back to the desk. The librarian who had issued it to him was still on duty.

"Will you want this again?" he inquired. "If so, we'll keep it out for you."

Paul noticed that the young fellow was looking at him with friendly interest and wondered a little shamefully if the librarian had witnessed his display of feeling.

"No, I shan't want it again."

He stood for a moment, as though expectant of a reply, but although the clerk's eyes remained upon him, he did not speak. Paul turned and went out into the noisy streets.

He walked slowly; twilight was falling as he turned into Ushaw Terrace. It was a narrow thoroughfare with a tall row of stucco houses on either side. Paul could not restrain a shudder as he entered the actual house where the murder was done, but setting his jaw, he mounted the damp-smelling stone staircase and rang the bell on the second landing.

Mr. Prusty admitted him to the untidy front parlour where, on a small gas ring, a bubbling pot of coffee diffused a rich aroma. The little tobacconist wore carpet slippers, an old velvet smoking-jacket and, as though to point up this costume, a somewhat battered fez. His manner was hospitable as he poured the coffee and offered his guest a cup.

Paul glanced about the room, furnished in worn red plush, and, caught by the ornate brass chandelier, his eyes finally came to rest upon the ceiling above his head.

"Yes," said Prusty, interpreting his expression. "I was in this very seat when the banging came through, such a fearful banging it made me rush up. I'll never forget the sight of her lying there, half-naked." He broke off. "There's no one there now . . . it's empty. I have a key . . . the landlord has me keep one . . . if you'd like to see the room."

"No, no." Paul shook his head. "I've had about as much as I can stand. All this afternoon I went through the case in the *Courier*."

"Ah, yes," Prusty meditated. "It was well reported there. They were even fair to me. And I made a poor enough show. Sprott, the prosecutor, made a regular fool of me. All because I would not swear the man who came out of that flat was Rees Mathry."

"You did not recognize him?"

"It was dark in the hall-way. I didn't have my glasses. Oh, I daresay I was wrong. . . . All the others were so positive. But I'm a stubborn man. I was not sure and I would not swear to it. Have you ever been in the witness-box?"

"No."

"God, when they have you there, they tie you in knots. They won't let you say what you want to say. Now there was one strange thing I never got the chance to mention. I used to discuss it with Dr. Tuke—he

was the doctor I called to see the body. Oh, he never figured in the case, they had their own medical experts, but he was interested and we often talked it over afterwards."

The tobacconist reflectively stirred his coffee.

"When I went in the sitting-room and saw that murder had been done, I rushed to the window. I wanted to catch another glimpse of the man that ran away. And I did. I saw him jump on a bicycle that stood against the railings and pedal off like mad. Now the colour of that bicycle was green, bright green . . . I'll swear to it. And have you ever seen a bright green bicycle, wherever you've been in England?"

Paul shook his head, puzzled.

"Strange, eh?" Prusty paused significantly. "Especially when you consider that all his life Mathry had never even possessed one of the usual black bicycles." He waved a deprecating hand. "Of course they made out that he had simply lifted it to make a quick getaway. But if so, who owned that green bicycle, and where the devil did it vanish to? They never found it."

There was a heavy pause. "Another thing," Prusty went on, deliberately. "That peculiar leather purse found beside the body. It was not the murdered woman's or Mathry's. Then whose was it? That was a point that bothered that fellow who had charge of the case. Swann."

"Swann," echoed Paul blankly.

"Detective-Inspector James Swann." Instinctively the tobacconist glanced about him, as though fearful of being overheard. "I'm no humanitarian, I don't like to stick my neck out for anyone. But I do think you ought to know about Swann."

Paul sat up as Prusty resumed in a guarded tone.

"Swann was a nice chap. When any of the young lads got up to mischief, he wouldn't run them in, he'd just talk to them. You see what I mean, he was regular decent. Unfortunately he had one weakness, the drink." Prusty shook his head. "It was strange, very strange. I knew Swann well, for he used to come to the shop. And of course I saw a lot of him during the case. When it was all over, I began to notice he was hitting the bottle harder. He seemed to have something on his mind. Then one day, it would be about a twelvemonth later, he came in maybe just a little tight. 'I'm going to take a big step, Albert,' he says to me: 'I'm going to see Walter Gillett.'"

Prusty paused to sip his coffee.

"Gillett was a first-class lawyer who did a lot of work about the police courts, and naturally I asked Swann why he was going to see him. But Jimmy shook his head. 'I can't say anything just now,' he answered. 'But maybe you'll hear all about it soon.'"

Again the tobacconist lifted his cup and sipped. Paul could barely contain himself.

"Well," Prusty continued, sombrely, "the very next day, Swann turned up for duty stupid drunk. He gave the wrong traffic signals and caused a serious car accident—a woman was run over and nearly killed. He was tried, dismissed from the force, and sentenced to six months' hard labour."

Paul asked, "Then . . . what became of him?"

"He was finished," said Prusty. "When Swann came out he tried a number of jobs but he never stuck at anything. He went to pieces. I can't say how he is now for I've lost track of him."

"But why did all this happen?" asked Paul. "Had he gone to see Gillett?"

"Ah!" Prusty answered meaningly. "Ask me another."

He drained the last of his coffee, and spoke in a still lower voice.

"One night, after Swann came out of gaol, he dropped into my shop. He'd been drinking for days, and he was pretty far gone. He said to me, 'Do you know what?' 'No, Jimmy,' I said, humouring him. 'Well,' he says, 'it's this. Don't ever try to tell tales out of school.' And he began to laugh, to laugh and laugh; he staggered out of my shop laughing, and by God it wasn't a laugh you'd want to hear."

"What else did he say?" Paul cried out.

"Nothing . . . then or later . . . not another word. But right or wrong, I had the feeling in my bones that he'd come to this pass through the Mathry case."

There was a long stillness. Nothing was clear to Paul, yet through the muddled darkness he felt again that strange incitement, urging him forward.

"It's getting late." Prusty was gazing at the clock. "If you're not careful you'll miss your train."

Paul stood up to go. "I can't take the train tonight," he said. "I must find out what Swann and Gillett have to say."

CHAPTER 4

PAUL awoke early next morning. When he had breakfasted he wrote a brief letter to his mother which he hoped would relieve her mind; then he set out for the centre of the city. The tobacconist was ignorant of the present whereabouts of Swann and Gillett, but he had at least been able to furnish the number of the lawyer's office in Temple Lane, with an address near the Corn Market where Swann had resided some two years ago.

Paul reached 15 Temple Lane at half past nine and found a man in a green baize apron, who had just opened up the premises.

"Is this Mr. Walter Gillett's office?"

The caretaker answered civilly enough. "It was. He's left this address."

"You wouldn't know where he is now?"

The caretaker summed up Paul with a sidelong glance. "Would it be worth as much as a bob to you?"

From his depleted supply of cash Paul paid over a shilling.

The caretaker spun the coin expertly and wiped his mouth with the back of his hand.

"He's in Orme Square, by the City Church. Go down to the end of Temple Lane, turn right. Look round and you'll see his name up. You can't miss it."

Paul found Orme Square without difficulty. It was, in fact, the City Churchyard, a pleasant old burying ground shaded by tall elms. At first Paul did not fully grasp the significance of the caretaker's directions. Then it dawned on him—Gillett was in the churchyard, dead. He restrained an angry impulse to return and exact satisfaction from the man in the baize apron. With Gillett gone, now more than ever he must try at once to find James Swann. He spun round resolutely and walked rapidly away.

Presently he was knocking at the door of a basement house which stood in a row behind the Corn Market. A woman in a wrapper came out.

"I am looking for Mr. Swann . . . Mr. James Swann." Paul made an effort to keep his tone matter-of-fact.

"He had a room here for many a month, but he's gone these two

years back," the woman said. "You wouldn't be seeking him for anything wrong?"

"Oh no," Paul said quickly. "Quite the contrary. Where did he go?"

"He went to a lodging-house in Ware Street kept by a man called Hart."

Ware Street was not more than half a mile away, a long poor thoroughfare, lined with cheap shops and hucksters' barrows. By consulting the city directory in a branch post office, Paul succeeded in locating the Hart lodging-house.

This was a brick tenement in a squalid court, approached by a narrow entrance. The bell pull had been torn from its socket, and there was no knocker on the dilapidated door. Paul rapped repeatedly with his knuckles on the blistered panels. Presently, there appeared a boy of twelve with a dirty face and swollen neck glands wrapped up in a strip of red flannel.

"There's no one home," he announced in a husky voice, before Paul could speak. He explained that he was sick, had been kept home from school, and that all the men who lodged in the house were at work. He knew of no one by the name of Swann. His mother, who looked after the place, would be back at four o'clock. Paul told the boy that he would return.

It was now afternoon and an impulse, which had been gathering within him since the previous night, drove Paul once again to the public library. The same clerk was on duty. He accepted in silence the slip that Paul handed him.

"The Y.M.C.A. is my address now," Paul felt compelled to explain. "I'm staying for a few days."

The clerk nodded and pressed the bell for the attendant, who soon reappeared burdened with two heavy folios—bound copies of the *Courier* for the year 1922. Paul sat down at a table and opened up the first volume.

Diligently, running his finger down each column, he scrutinized every page. It was tedious work but he persisted. When he had completed his examination he sat back in his chair, frowning, rubbing his forehead with his hand. He rose to return the files.

"Did you find what you wanted?" The clerk made the inquiry sound like part of the regular routine. Yet, somehow, Paul sensed a lively curiosity in that simple question.

"No, I didn't."

There was a pause. All at once Paul was swept up by a desire to confide in the young librarian.

"I was looking for the report on the trial of a police-inspector named Swann in the year 1922. I'm trying to locate him."

"Any idea of where to look?" The question came smartly.

"He's probably still in the neighbourhood. By all accounts he's down and out."

"I see."

Paul thanked him in a few awkward words, and went out. He walked in the direction of Ware Street, and at five o'clock reached the Hart lodging-house. The landlady had returned. She was a stout woman with a check shawl across her shoulders.

"Yes," she admitted. "I remember Swann, well enough. Down on his luck, he was. Too much lifting of the elbow, if you follow me. I wasn't sorry when he left."

"Did he leave you his address?"

"Wait a minute, let me think. The question is, did I write it down." She turned to the boy who stood listening in the back hall. "Fetch me the book, Josey."

The boy brought her a dog-eared ledger. Moistening her forefinger, she began to flick over the pages.

"Ah, what's this, now?"

Paul peered at the place she indicated. There it was:

*James Swann,
c/o Roberts,
15 Castle Road,
Bromlea.*

Quickly, he copied it in his note-book, thanked the woman and made his escape. It was too late to go to Bromlea tonight. But he would go tomorrow.

ON the following evening, Paul was again on his way back to the Y.M.C.A. All his high hopes were gone. He had combed Bromlea from end to end, and all without the least avail. Swann was gone, vanished without trace.

Despondently, Paul entered the hostel and slowly climbed the stairs to his room. He noticed a telegram on the mantel. He tore it open and read :

DREADFULLY ANXIOUS RETURN AT ONCE SUMMER SCHOOL
APPOINTMENT AWAITING YOU LOVE FROM ALL

MOTHER

Crouching before a tiny fire in his room, he reread the message. Apparently his mother had spoken to Professor Slade, and in his present mood he wondered if he should not return to the summer-school position. The phrase "love from all" made him smile, so patently did it include the affection of a forgiving Ella.

When he had warmed up he went downstairs. In the lobby, he saw the doorboy coming towards him.

"There's a young fellow to see you in the visitors' room."

Surprised, Paul followed the boy to the musty little lounge, where he found the clerk from the library. Detached from his official position the young librarian had an ingratiating frankness that was disarming.

"I've something to say to you." His glance briskly swept the empty room. "I suppose we can talk here without being overheard. My name's Boulia . . . Mark Boulia."

He held out his hand, Paul gripped it, then sat down. Mark studied him quizzically before he resumed.

"That first day at the library I watched you—I couldn't help it, you were so obviously . . . in difficulties. I felt sorry for you, and friendly, too. You know how it is, you take to a person at first sight. Afterwards I went through the file. I know who you are."

This Paul had surmised. He kept silent.

"Yesterday you were looking for some further references. You didn't trace them. But when you had gone, I did. In one paper, a small one, I found a comment on the Swann trial. It was a protest against the harshness of Swann's sentence."

"Why are you telling me this?"

"Because I have found Swann."

Paul stared at him unbelievably.

"It wasn't too difficult . . . after what you told me. I simply checked the relief lists and registers of all the city hospitals. Swann is in Belvedere Infirmary."



SWANN lay in the bare and dismal pauper ward of the infirmary. His bed was completely screened off; on the floor there stood an oxygen cylinder equipped with a long inhaler. Swann's frame showed that he had been a big man, but now he was much emaciated. His shallow, listless breathing barely disturbed the contour of his ribs.

It was the afternoon visiting hour and, beside the bed, Paul stood with Mark Boulia. Paul had made an impassioned plea; and now he waited tensely for Swann to speak.

Swann did not hurry; he had his own thoughts. But presently he let his eyes fall on Paul and said, "You're like him." He was silent for a long time before resuming in a spent voice:

"It's queer I should see you now. After what happened to me I swore I'd keep my mouth shut. But you're Mathry's son. And I'm done for anyway. So here goes."

A short pause—Swann seemed to be looking deep into the past.

"When I was assigned to that case I was as keen as mustard and I remember like it was yesterday when the big clue came in. A bookie's tout named Rocca turned up at headquarters in such a state of panic

he could scarcely talk. He'd been friendly with the murdered woman over a period of twelve months, but he'd had nothing to do with the murder—he couldn't have—because on September 8th and 9th he'd been out of town at the races, and he had a dozen witnesses to prove it.

"Well, this didn't help us much, but we thought we'd detain Rocca anyhow. When he heard that he was to be held, he really spilt the beans. He told us about his pal, Rees Mathry, and about Mathry's attempt to fake an alibi. We got on the trail at once and Rees Mathry was picked up."

Swann paused, moistened his lips.

"Unfortunately for him, Mathry made the mistake of striking an officer. Add on the fact that he was taken in the very act of leaving for South America and you had a very damning situation. And straight away he made it worse. At his preliminary examination the first question asked of him was: 'Where were you between eight and nine on the evening of September 8th?' Not knowing that his friend had given him away, Mathry answered: 'Playing billiards with a man named Rocca.' That seemed to put the clincher on it."

Swann let his head fall back.

"I must tell you about my boss, the Superintendent—now he's the head of the Wortley police, Chief Constable Adam Dale. He'd worked his way up from the bottom, a first-rate officer, and he never took a bribe in his life. He loved his work and used to boast to me that he could spot a criminal a mile away. And from the beginning, he'd spotted Mathry.

"Although the evidence seemed so conclusive, I pointed out that Mathry had booked the tickets to South America in his own name, that he had likewise engaged hotel rooms for himself and his family quite openly, a thing inconceivable in the case of a man who wished to cover up his traces. Besides, Mathry impressed me favourably. He made no attempt to deny that he knew Spurling, acknowledged he had sketched and sent her the postcard. He maintained he was out only for a bit of mild amusement. I put all this up to the Chief, but he was convinced—and quite honestly, mind you—that he had the right man."

Swann rested for a moment before resuming:

"The official mind works in regular channels—nobody knows that better than me. Dale *wanted* to find a weapon among Mathry's belongings accountable for the victim's injuries. He also *wanted* to discover

blood-stains upon Mathry's suit. And he *wanted* witnesses who could identify Mathry.

"Almost at once, in one of Mathry's trunks, the Chief Constable found his weapon: a razor, slightly rusty from disuse. Mathry freely admitted it had been in his possession for years—he had inherited it from his father. Now, if Mathry had used this blade to do the deed was it likely that he would have carefully preserved it for us to find? No, the first action of a murderer is to rid himself of the weapon. Yet Dale was near jumping with pride and satisfaction when he showed the razor to me.

"It was sent to the experts to be examined for blood-stains, together with Mathry's clothing. Meanwhile, the examination of the witnesses was proceeding—Mr. Prusty, Edward Collins and Louisa Burt. Prusty and Collins seemed reluctant to testify. However, the witness Burt was quite a different character. This young girl, on a dark night, in a street with hardly any lights, got one second's glimpse of the criminal. Yet she supplied the most exact details of his appearance.

"‘A man about thirty-five,’ said she. ‘Tall, thin and dark, with pale features, straight nose, clean-shaven. He wore a check cap, a drab-coloured raincoat, and brown shoes.’

"At first, Dale was pleased to get a description. However, Mathry turned out to be neither tall, dark, nor even clean-shaven, but of medium size, fair, with a brown moustache. Also, his clothing was quite different. However, Burt was equal to the occasion. Quite calmly she shelved the big, clean-shaven character in favour of a shorter man with a moustache. And Collins, who, immediately after the event, had told me he would not be able positively to identify the man, now came into line with Burt."

Swann rested again, his pale lips drawn back.

"The next step was to take them to view the prisoner. Eleven policemen in plain clothes were lined up in a room with Mathry. The two witnesses were positive in their identification. Mathry was removed to Wortley, formally charged with the murder."

The sick man turned weakly on his side and gazed directly at Paul.

"I still couldn't think that his number was up, but I hadn't bargained on the counsel for the prosecution. It was Matthew Sprott who really did the trick. He's now Sir Matthew, but then he was unknown, and desperately anxious to succeed. The minute I heard him I saw that he meant to hang Mathry.

"Well, the prosecution called all its experts. They didn't call Dr. Tuke, the doctor who had first seen the body. They had, besides Dobson the police surgeon, a professor who testified that the razor could have caused the injuries which had proved fatal to the victim. He was not prepared to swear that there were blood-stains upon the weapon or on the prisoner's coat, but he had found traces of what might have been mammalian corpuscles. Next came the handwriting expert who swore that the note found in the victim's flat was written by Mathry 'in a disguised left hand.' When Collins and Burt went into the box they surpassed themselves. Burt, especially with her young innocent face and big earnest eyes, made a tremendous impression on the jury.

"Then came the speech for the Crown. For three hours Sprott let himself go without a single written note. I tell you it was masterly. The jury hung on every word. The speech by prisoner's counsel was useless: he was an oldish man with a thin voice and he seemed quite unaware of evidence favourable to Mathry.

"Well, it was soon over. Guilty. The prisoner's protests of innocence went through me like a knife. But he was dragged away and the five hundred pound reward was paid out to Collins and Burt."

The sick man's strength seemed to fail. In an exhausted voice, he said: "Come again in a day or so. You'll hear the rest then."

Silently Paul rose, pressed the sick man's hand between his own, then followed Mark Boulia through the door.

CHAPTER 5

COULD it be that an innocent man had been buried alive for fifteen years? Swann had offered no concrete proof, only an attitude of mind. Yet the mere possibility drove Paul frantic. But he realized that now, above all, he must be calm and practical.

His first step was to write to his mother asking for a parcel of fresh clothing, his next to find a permanent lodging. He discovered a cheap attic in Poole Street; the advance payment on it almost exhausted his money. When he had washed, he set out to find some means of supporting himself.

Wortley was a humming city, but its industries were highly specialized, mainly china, cutlery, and leather goods—trades demanding a technical

skill which Paul did not possess; nor was he yet fully qualified as a teacher. When two days had gone by without result, he scanned the "situations vacant" columns of the newspaper with increasing anxiety.

But on the following morning a stroke of real luck came his way. As he walked along Ware Street he observed, pasted on the window of a large store known as The Bonanza Bazaar, a notice:

PIANIST WANTED

Apply Mr. Victor Harris, Manager, within

After a moment's hesitation, Paul entered the shop, a sort of fixed price store, and was directed to Mr. Harris, a man wearing a flowered tie and striped, double-breasted suit. When Paul told him he wished to apply for the job, the manager led him briskly to a section of the store where an upright piano stood among a display of sheet music. Taking a piece at random, he placed it on the instrument and said briefly: "Play!"

Paul sat down and ran his fingers over the keys. He could read perfectly at sight. He played the piece through, repeated it with some variations of his own, then picking up several other sheets, he played these over, too. Before he had finished, Mr. Harris was beating time approvingly on the counter with his rhinestone ring.

He nodded his decision. "You're hired. Three pounds a week and a sandwich lunch. Only see you keep going. No slacking or you're out on your ear. And use the loud pedal. Make the customers buy."

Paul kept on playing all day. He began freshly enough, but as the hours wore on his muscles ached from sitting on the hard piano stool. His mind, too, was in a turmoil, torn by thoughts of his father, by half-formed plans and projects.

Towards one o'clock Harris swaggered out for lunch and, after a few minutes, the girl in charge of the cafeteria brought over coffee and a plate of sandwiches to Paul. With a smile, he asked her name. She told him, flatly, Lena Andersen and moved off immediately. There was nothing uncivil in this, yet Paul sensed a constraint which stirred his curiosity.

She could not have been more than twenty years of age—tall, with blonde hair and long limbs. Her features were regular and attractive but in repose her face was unusually sad. Paul was drawn towards her. He noticed that, although she appeared to be on good terms with the

other assistants, she kept herself apart. What sort of person was she?

The afternoon dragged on. He closed his eyes while his fingers hammered on the keyboard. Six o'clock came at last and, hurrying from the store, he made his way directly to the infirmary. Swann seemed worse, and was disinclined to talk. But, as Paul sat patiently by his bedside, he gradually relented. He gazed at the young man with a kind of pity.

"I warn you . . . if you go on with this it'll change your whole life . . . as it did mine. And once you've put your hand to it, there'll be no turning back. How do you propose to begin?"

"I thought if I typed out a statement and you signed it, I could take it to the authorities. . . ."

Swann could not laugh—but a short, sardonic grimace passed across his pale lips.

"What authorities? The police? They're already fully informed—and quite satisfied with the situation. The Public Prosecutor, Sir Matthew Sprott? I advise you not to meddle with him. No. The Home Secretary alone has the power to open up the matter and you wouldn't get within a mile of him with your present evidence. They'd simply laugh at you."

"But you believe my father is innocent."

"I know he's innocent," Swann answered. "In his summing up the judge called the murder a vile, monstrous crime, for which the extreme penalty was too light a punishment. And yet they reprieved Mathry. Why, I ask you, why? Maybe they weren't quite sure that the man they'd convicted was guilty and so they didn't swing him. They gave him slow death—life imprisonment—instead."

The sick man struggled to regain his breath.

"No," Swann said presently. "There is only one way to force them to reopen the case. *You must discover the real murderer.*"

Hitherto Paul had considered only his father's innocence; the thought of the actual assassin had scarcely entered his head. A new and formidable shadow had fallen across his path.

"What about Rocca?" he ventured, after a prolonged silence.

Swann shook his head contemptuously.

"He hadn't the guts. He only wanted to save his own skin. But speaking of skin," the sick man said, "we come back to the purse that was found by the body. Believe it or not, it was made of the finest leather in the world . . . tanned human hide. So you see," Swann resumed in

that same vein of bitter satire, "you've only to lay your hands on a character perverted enough to possess such an article, link him up with a few other pieces of evidence that got mislaid—and you have the killer." Again that sardonic facial tremor. "After fifteen years . . . it should be relatively easy."

"Don't!" Paul said. "For God's sake."

Swann's expression changed. "Well, if you must . . . let me tell you more about the two main witnesses, Edward Collins and Louisa Burt.

"When they came to headquarters to claim the five hundred pound reward I was on duty. Now, as I've told you, I had my serious doubts about this pair. I put them in a side room to wait. I was next door and, because of an acoustic arrangement we had, was able to hear everything they said. I wrote it down, too. Collins, who sounded scared, said: 'Will we get the money?' 'We'll get it, Ed, don't worry,' Burt answered, cool as you please, and she added: 'We might do even better.' 'What do you mean?' he said. She laughed. 'I've got something up my sleeve that might surprise you.'

"That seemed to bother Collins. He said: 'Mathry *was* the man, wasn't he, Louisa?' 'Shut up, will you,' she came back at him. 'It's too late to back down now. Don't you understand, you fool, it don't pay to go against the police. Besides, things may come out of this better than you ever dreamed. I've 'ad a notion these last few days,' she went on in a kind of far-away voice. 'I'll live like a lady yet, Ed. Just let me take my chance.'"

Swann paused. When he resumed he looked straight at Paul.

"I'd heard enough to confirm my worst suspicions. Burt, out of her own mouth, had given the show away. She had seen the murderer and come out with his description. When this didn't quite fit Mathry, she obligingly shifted her position. She wanted to stand well with the authorities, to be the little *prima donna*, right in front of the picture, and of course to get the reward. It was her influence that swung Collins. And then, when it was all over, headlines, publicity, praise, she began to wonder about all the things that hadn't come out at the trial and to ask herself if, after all, it wasn't somebody else she had seen, a vaguely familiar figure, that she'd noticed around Eldon on her way to and from the laundry. Suddenly it came to her . . . a possibility of who this man might be . . . a chance . . . and with it a sense of golden opportunity.

"I ought to have gone to the Chief, but I didn't . . . I'd badgered him too much in the early stages of the case and we weren't on the best of terms. In the end, I went to a lawyer named Walter Gillett. He told me to keep clear of the whole business. He said: 'Jimmy, for God's sake, don't bring a hornet's nest about your ears.' By this time, I was in such a state of tension and confusion, I went on a blind, went on duty soused and . . . you know the rest."

Swann made a gesture that indicated there was nothing more he wished to say.

Paul broke the silence.

"Are they still here . . . Burt and Collins?"

"You'll never get hold of Collins—he married years ago and emigrated to New Zealand. But Burt is still here, and she is the key to the whole enigma." Swann paused. "There's just one chance in a million you might get something out of her."

"Where can I find her?" Paul exclaimed.

"She works for a highly respected family . . . another proof of how she can gull decent people."

From beneath his pillow Swann took a scrap of paper on which an address was written. He handed it to Paul.

"There!" he said, in a flat voice. "Now let me be. I feel dāmned bad and want to get some sleep."

Paul got to his feet. His voice was charged with feeling.

"Thank you," he said. "I'll come again soon."

He swung round and left the ward.

ON THE following evening, after work, Paul met Mark Boulia by appointment outside the Bonanza. "So we're making a start tonight!" Boulia broke out excitedly, as they moved off along the thronged pavement. "I've hardly been able to wait since I phoned you. What is this you found out about Burt?"

Paul was silent. Boulia's mercurial temperament, his tendency to treat the matter light-heartedly, as a thrilling adventure, made him question the wisdom of having asked him to accompany him. Yet he remembered the generous help Mark had given him, so, after a moment, he answered:

"Burt is employed as a domestic servant. This is her evening off. I've a fair idea what she looks like and where to find her."

"Good work," Mark exclaimed, and added, "How did you leave Swann?"

Paul shook his head, glancing at him sideways. Boulia lost his effusiveness.

"Worse?" he murmured.

"I called at the hospital at lunchtime. He was too ill to see me."

They walked in silence to Brimlock Hill, one of the best sections of the city, and on to an adjoining cramped little colony of back streets and cobbled alleys, with a number of small shops and one public house: The Royal Oak.

"That's it," Paul said.

Inside the tavern, he led the way to an oak table and, having ordered two glasses of ale, cautiously surveyed the room.

He turned to Mark. "Not here yet."

He had no sooner spoken than the swing doors opened again and a woman entered and walked, with the air of an *habituée*, to a corner booth. Paul guessed at once that it was Louisa Burt. She was rather heavy about the hips and bust and wore a cheap plaid suit with yellow gloves and a fancy handbag.

She settled herself, ordered a small gin and, after fussing with the contents of her handbag, explored the saloon with her eyes. Paul, meeting her gaze, smiled slightly. She immediately turned away, as if insulted, but two minutes later she was again looking in their direction. This time Paul rose and crossed over to her booth. With the correct note of ingratiating politeness, he said:

"Good evening."

There was a pause. "Are you addressing me?"

"Yes. If you're alone, perhaps we might join you."

"I'm not alone, not really. I'm waiting for a friend. Of course, he might be detained tonight, working late. He's a very important man."

"His loss will be our gain. Have a drink?"

"I'm not in the habit. Still—if you insist."

Paul signalled to Mark, who came over to the booth carrying Paul's tumbler and his own.

"May I introduce my companion?"

"Pleased to meet you I am sure. I forgot my visiting cards but my name is Miss Burt."

As they sat down she arranged her skirt in a ladylike manner; then, crooking her little finger, she emptied her glass.

"Now it's my treat, Miss Burt," Mark said. "What will you have?"

"Well, nothing was further from my thoughts. Gin."

Her eyes kept moving over them in shallow yet appraising inquiry. Her face was thickly powdered and her plump childish cheeks, indrawn at the corners of the mouth, gave her thick moist lips a strange sort of smirk. She had practically no forehead.

"Well, here's luck," Paul exclaimed, when her drink arrived.

"You know," Mark went on, "there's nothing beats a nice convivial evening. Among friends, you understand."

"I got to be back at nine," she said warningly. "I couldn't walk out nowhere tonight."

"Ah, well," Paul said easily. "We'll have better luck next time. We'll be properly acquainted then."

"You are perfect gentlemen, I must say. Some does rush you, something cruel."

Keenly alert, Paul kept the conversation flowing, playing on Burt's vanity, accepting with admiration her explanation that she was "lady housekeeper" in charge of a large mansion on Brimlock Hill. After several drinks a flood of self-pity welled into her glassy eyes.

"It's nice to meet two perfect gents. Not like some I could mention, only I wouldn't, being a perfect lady myself. I was brought up very strict, you understand, educated by the nuns in a French convent. Oh, it was lovely there. Of course, me being half French myself made a difference, they all knew what I would have been if only I'd had my rights, and p'raps they guessed the terrible time what was in store for me." She broke off, searching their faces humbly. "Does that surprise you?"

Paul shook his head gravely, thinking at the same time, "Dear God, what a natural-born liar!"

"If you only knew." She clutched at Paul's arm. "What I've went through! Oh, if only I'd had my chance."

"And didn't you?" Mark prompted, sympathetically.

"Something happened. I only done right, mind you. And what did I get for it? A few pounds what went in six months. I only wanted to be recognized proper . . . have my place."

Paul had the wit to keep silent but Mark, in his excitement, leaned forward. "Why don't you tell us about it?" he pressed. "Perhaps we could help you."

There was a sharp pause. Burt suddenly seemed to recollect herself. "I got to go now," she said.

Masking his chagrin, Paul paid for the drinks, and escorted her through the swing-doors followed by Mark.

"Perhaps we could see you home?"

"Well . . . only to the gate, mind you."

They left the cobbled alley and set out along the deserted suburban road, Burt between Boulia and Paul. More than ever Paul exerted himself to please. Presently they reached a broad avenue, and opposite the end house Burt drew up.

"What a lovely mansion," Paul said.

"Yes." Burt was flattered. "I'm with the Oswalds . . . most refined people."

"Well, naturally." Paul spoke persuasively. "May we see you next Wednesday?"

Burt hesitated, but only for a moment. "All right," she said. "Same time, at the Oak."

Paul removed his hat, and with great politeness held out his hand. As he did so, the front door of the villa opened and an elderly gentleman came out, carrying a few letters, evidently making for the post-box at the end of the road. He noticed Burt and, in a pleasant voice, remarked:

"Good evening, Louisa."

"Good evening, sir," she answered, in a humble voice. The change of tone to respectful servility was almost comic.

When he had gone, Burt, in some discomfiture, took leave of her two companions. As Paul and Boulia turned away they heard the slam of the back door.

CHAPTER 6

THE next day, at the store, Paul was strained and preoccupied. When Lena Andersen brought him his luncheon he ate without his usual appetite. Perhaps she noticed this for she remarked:

"Don't you like the ham?"

He came out of his abstraction, glanced up, and forced a smile.

"I do. I just don't happen to be hungry today." He added: "You're much too good to me. I know Harris said I could have a snack. But you bring me a regular spread."

"It's not a proper lunch. Sandwiches aren't too good for anyone."

He did not contradict her. He was pleased by the way in which she stood and talked with him. It was as though each had sensed the other's loneliness.

"You live by yourself, I suppose."

"Yes," he agreed. "And you?"

"Oh, no. I'm very lucky. I have two rooms in a friend's house in Ware Place."

"That's quite an establishment."

She nodded simply, looking away. "I can do it. I work hard, you see. Often I go out and work in the evenings at public banquets. It's good pay."

"Don't you ever go dancing, or to the pictures, like the others?"

"No." She shrugged her shoulders. "I don't bother about that."

She stood, gazing ahead absently, then she took his empty cup and with a faint half-smile went back to the cafeteria.

Lena's conversation with Paul had not passed unnoticed by some of the sharp-eyed waitresses and when she returned to her counter, one of the younger girls, named Nancy Wilson, nudged her neighbour.

"D'you see that?" She made a sly movement of her head. "Miss Andersen had a long music lesson today."

"Doh, ray, me!" sang out a second girl.

"Oh, Lena!" another called over, with a broad smile. "Was you arranging to have your piano tuned?"

A general titter of laughter went up and Nancy attempted to cap the joke. "Careful, Lena," she called. "Once bitten, twice shy."

There was an uncomfortable silence. The girls suddenly became busy again and several gave Nancy a quick angry glance. Lena, who gave no sign of having heard, picked up her charge list and began to add up the figures.

Paul wondered what was being said, but the incident soon passed from his mind. He was unable to concentrate upon anything but his next meeting with Burt.

At last Wednesday arrived and somehow Paul managed to get through the day. He had arranged to meet Mark outside the Bonanza at seven o'clock, and at closing time he was among the first to leave.

But at half past seven there was still no sign of Mark. Paul could wait no longer and started off at a fast pace towards the library. In ten minutes he was there and saw that Mark was still on duty. Hurrying to the desk, he exclaimed: "What's the matter? Aren't you coming?"

Boulia had flinched perceptibly at the sight of Paul. He spoke in a hurried undertone. "I'm sorry to let you down, Paul, but the truth is . . . I'll have to drop out of our arrangement." Mark's voice fell to a still lower key. "Take my advice and drop it, too. I can't say more, but I was never more serious in my life."

A strained silence followed.

"At least I'll see you again?" Paul said slowly.

Mark shook his head. "I'm taking a job outside the city."

Paul drew in a slow, comprehending breath. Now even Mark's co-operation was gone. He was alone. He held out his hand and said simply:

"I'm sorry if I've got you in a mess. Thank you for all you've done and good luck. I hope we'll meet again."

He turned sharply and went out of the library to the nearest telephone booth.

"This is the Royal Oak Inn. Jack speaking," said a voice in answer to his call.

"Is Miss Burt there?"

"I'm sorry," the voice came back, "Miss Burt isn't here. She came in as usual and left about eight."

Paul dropped the receiver back upon its hook, reflected for a moment, then left the booth. In the Square he took a tram direct to Brimlock Hill. His watch showed half past eight when he arrived at the end house in the avenue.

Paul opened the gate and then, nerving himself, he walked round by the service entrance and knocked on the back door which was opened by a woman in a housekeeper's black dress.

"Could I see Miss Louisa Burt, please?"

The woman looked Paul up and down.

"She's gone to her room with a headache."

"Couldn't she come down for a minute?" Paul pressed.

"I'm sorry." The housekeeper shook her head and closed the door. Discouraged, Paul nevertheless told himself he was not beaten. He must see Burt at all costs.

He retraced his steps to the front of the house. Here, through a large window he made out the man whom he had already seen walking to the post-box, a woman who seemed to be his wife, and another couple in the sedately furnished drawing-room.

He saw that a bridge table was set out. It would be late before they finished and Louisa came in to clear up. He resigned himself to a lengthy wait.

Suddenly, in the shadows, he heard a heavy step behind him. He swung round and found himself confronted by a police officer.

"What are you up to?"

At the officer's words an icy wave rushed over Paul.

"I wanted to see someone in the house."

"Is that how you make a call—hiding among the bushes? You'd better come quiet."

There was nothing for it but to submit. Paul set off beside the policeman in silence.

It was a long march back to the centre of the city. Significantly, Paul realized that he was not being taken to a local station. At last



they passed through an archway and entered the Wortley Police Headquarters.

"Well, now, what's all this about?" asked the sergeant, whose name, conspicuously stamped on the charge sheet, was Jupp.

In routine, almost perfunctory fashion, Jupp took down the particulars offered him by his subordinate, glancing at Paul queerly from time to time. Finally, he pointed his pen towards a bench.

"I've an idea the Chief would like to see you. Sit there."

Paul did as he was bid. By this time he was convinced that he had not been picked up by accident.

At last he received a signal from Sergeant Jupp. He followed him down a passage to a comfortable office, furnished with leather arm-chairs and a wide mahogany desk. Paul's attention was riveted upon the man who sat behind it. He recognized him at once from the photograph he had seen in the library: the Chief Constable of Wortley, Adam Dale.

"Sit down, my boy."

The quiet voice, warm with unforeseen friendliness, came to Paul as a shock; he sank into the easy chair before the desk.

The Chief Constable was now a man of fifty-five. He had an enormous frame, a massive neck, and arms as thick as an ordinary man's thigh. He was all bone and solid muscle, the features carved in granite, the eyes grey as ice.

"I've wanted to see you for some days now, lad," Dale resumed, "and this seemed as good an opportunity as any."

Paul braced himself in his chair.

"First of all, I want you to understand that I know who you are and all about you. Just after your arrival I had a telegram from Belfast, sent by your good friends there, asking us to keep you out of harm. I know all that you've been doing."

The Chief Constable picked up an ebonite ruler and turned it thoughtfully in his tremendous hands.

"Now look here, lad . . . I've a fair idea of how you feel towards me. I'm the brute who sent your father up for life. That's your side of the case. Well, let me tell you mine. It's this. I only did my duty. It's my job to prosecute wrongdoers and protect the right."

Dale paused and pointed the ruler at Paul. "If you set yourself up against the forces of law and order you'll wind up in trouble. See where

it's got you already. You're found hanging round a big house after dark. Mind you, I bring no charges. I'm just trying to show you where this sort of mischief is likely to end."

Paul sat silent. At first he had meant to argue his side of the case. But some secret foresight held him back.

"It's not my place to give you advice." Dale's tone was reasonable. "But take my tip and go home. I'd hate to see you get hurt."

He made a gesture of dismissal, cordial rather than curt. Without a word, Paul rose and emerged into the cool night air, free. The Chief Constable's outspoken candour had shaken him. There was no mistaking the other's honesty. Yet the very nature of Dale's demand, and the circumstances which had preceded it, awoke in him a hot defiance, a longing for a stronger course of action which for some days had been developing in his mind.

His need of advice upon this matter was immediate, and despite the lateness of the hour, he thought, a trifle desperately:

"I must see Swann . . . at once. If I'm to be blocked here I must take a more direct approach. After all, it was he who told me I would get redress only at the highest levels."

Striding through the streets, he soon reached the infirmary. But there the aged porter at the entrance lodge mildly shook his head.

"I'm sorry, lad. He's off the list for good. He passed away this afternoon."

Later that evening, after prolonged reflection, Paul made his decision. He wrote and posted a letter to Westminster.

THE Liberal Member of Parliament for Wortley enjoyed his brief visits to his constituency, especially in November, when the partridge shooting was at its best. George Birley came of local country stock and his success in London had not dulled his affection for his old friends and his favourite sport. He was a popular figure in Wortley and, at fifty, ruddy, clean-shaven, genial, a great hand at a story, fine judge of a cigar, he had become a kind of symbol of native worth unspoiled by success.

True, his career in Parliament had not been especially noteworthy. There were some who said that a good fellow was not necessarily a good statesman, that were it not for his noble wife, Lady Ursula Duncaster,

and her highly placed connexions, George might not have had his place in governing the nation.

On this particular morning Birley was in excellent humour. In the suite they always kept for him at the Queen's Hotel, he was at toast and marmalade and his third cup of coffee. In an hour he would be snuffing the rich earth of his boyhood with three good companions and his new cocker, just broken to the gun.

A waiter entered. "There's a young man asking for you, sir."

Birley looked up from his paper and frowned.

"I can't possibly see him. I'm going out in ten minutes."

"He says he has an appointment, sir. He gave me this letter."

Birley took the letter which the waiter handed him—his own letter, with the House of Commons heading. What a nuisance! He had sent this days ago, in response to a rather vague communication, then forgotten all about it. Still, he was a man who prided himself on never going back on his word. "All right," he said. "Bring him up."

A moment later Paul was shown in. Birley motioned him to a chair at the table.

"Well!" he exclaimed heartily. "I've been expecting you ever since you wrote. Will you have a cup of coffee?"

"No, thank you, sir."

"Let's come to the point then, young man," Birley said, "I'm rather pressed, you know. Have an important conference outside the city."

"I guessed you mightn't have much time, sir, so I prepared a type-written statement of the facts."

"Good, good!" Birley approved blandly. "Tell me in a few words what it's about."

Paul moistened his lips, took a swift deep breath. His recital lasted exactly seven minutes, and when it was over Birley sat like a man caught in a most unpleasant trap. He cleared his throat.

"I can't believe this is true. It sounds like a complete cock-and-bull story to me."

He rose and strode up and down the room, furious at the blight put upon his day. He couldn't stick his head into such a hornet's nest. No man in his senses would touch it with a barge-pole. And yet he experienced an uneasy qualm. With a fretful glance at the clock, he temporized.

"All right, then. Leave me that damn statement of yours. Come and see me again this evening at seven."

Paul handed over the document with an expression of thanks, then quietly left the room. As he hurried towards the Bonanza he was hopeful that he had made some impression on Birley.

The day passed with intolerable slowness. Paul was at the Queen's at quarter past seven and, after a short wait, was shown upstairs. But on this occasion there was no affability in Birley's manner. By way of greeting he barely nodded. Then he favoured the young man with a long, unsociable scrutiny. Finally he spoke.

"I've gone through that paper of yours. I must say you've put it together very cleverly. But there are always two sides to a case. And you've stated only one of them."

"Only one of them can be true," Paul countered quickly.

Birley frowned and shook his head.

"Things like that simply don't happen. Haven't we the best system of legal justice in the world? What could be fairer than trial by jury? Good Lord! It's been going on for over seven hundred years!"

"That might be an argument against it," Paul answered in a low voice. "I've thought about this a great deal, sir. This legal system, the best in the world, first convicts a man of murder and condemns him to hang; then, when it questions its own judgment, it reverses itself, and sends him to a living hell in prison for the rest of his life. Is that justice?" Paul rose to his feet, his eyes blazing. "That's what happened to my father. He's in Stoneheath because of a system of criminal procedure which relies on circumstantial evidence, on witnesses who are unfit to testify, on manipulation of facts by the prosecution, on 'experts' who are no more than paid 'yes' men for the Crown, and on a public Prosecutor whose purpose is less to secure justice than to hang the prisoner in the dock." Ignoring Birley, and swept away by his obsession, Paul went on.

"You're my representative in Parliament. Even if you don't believe the statement I gave you, it's your duty to see that it gets a proper hearing. If you don't, I'll go out myself and shout it in the public square."

Suddenly realizing what he was saying, Paul stopped short. His legs turned weak and he sat down, covering his eyes with his hand. He felt that he had utterly destroyed his chance of success.

But he was wrong. Birley admired courage and often took a liking to

those who "could speak up to him." He had begun to feel, also, that there might be something untoward about this case.

He took a few paces up and down the carpet. Then he said:

"In spite of all the words you've thrown at me, I do stand for fair play. I don't like this business of yours one little bit. But, by heaven, I won't fight shy of it on that account. I'll bring it to the floor of the House of Commons. Yes, by the Almighty, I'll land it right in the lap of the Home Secretary himself."

Paul raised his eyes. So unexpected, so staggering was this victory that he felt the room spin dizzily about him. Blindly he accepted the hand which Birley held out to him, and a few minutes later was in the street, with a wild singing in his heart.

CHAPTER 7

THE *Wortley Courier* reported verbatim the proceedings in the House of Commons. Although he knew there could be no immediate result of Birley's efforts, Paul read it eagerly every evening.

Buoyed by hope, he now cheerfully made the best of his present circumstances. At his lodgings he widened his nodding acquaintance with the only other boarder of his own age—James Crocket, an accountant's clerk. Crocket, a rather stodgy character, was caution itself in returning Paul's friendly overtures, but one Saturday morning he speculatively produced two Sunday tickets to the Botanical Gardens from his pocket-book.

"Would you care to have these? It's very nice. The public isn't admitted on Sundays—I got these from the Society."

Unwilling to hurt Crocket's feelings, Paul accepted the tickets with a word of thanks and dashed off to the store. In his change of mood he found himself playing without boredom. From time to time he gazed at Lena Andersen across the aisles. Her earlier reticence seemed to have returned and this withdrawal from the friendship he offered hurt him. At lunchtime one day—it was Saturday—a sudden impulse took hold of him.

"Lena," he said lightly, "why don't you and I take a small outing tomorrow afternoon? I have two tickets for the Botanical Gardens. It won't be wildly exciting, but it might break the monotony of our young lives."

"It's very kind of you," she said, with her head averted. "I don't often go out. . . ."

He could not understand her confusion, so completely out of proportion to his casual invitation. "Think it over," he said.

Lena went slowly back to her counter, strangely excited. Since coming to Wortley, she had not accepted the slightest attentions from any man. There had been difficulties, of course. The manager, Harris, for instance, had pestered her, but her rigid indifference had gradually shaken him off. Then, not infrequently, she was accosted and followed in the streets—occasions which caused a sickening revival of her secret dread.

And yet, as the afternoon wore on, she told herself that there could be no great harm in accepting Paul's invitation. She must not carry to excess a resolution taken under great stress and anguish of mind. When business slackened and she had an opportunity, she crossed the store and told him she would be glad to go.

Thus, after lunch, on the following day, which was fine and sunny, Paul found himself strolling along Ware Place. As he reached No. 61, the door opened and Lena, wearing a dark Sunday suit and hat, came out. Behind her was an elderly woman with bright, bird-like eyes who introduced herself to Paul.

"I'm Mrs. Hanley." She smiled. "I've heard about you from Lena. I'm told you are a great musician," she remarked, still searching his face with those bright eyes.

Paul laughed outright. "I pound the piano a little."

"I don't want to keep you—just wanted to say 'how do you do.' " As though satisfied, Mrs. Hanley gave Lena a tender, encouraging smile. "Have a good time," she said.

At the Botanical Gardens, which lay in the Wortley suburbs, Paul and Lena surveyed pleasant rolling lawns and the avenue of shapely chestnut trees leading to a distant lake. "There won't be much to see outside this time of year," Paul said, "but let's take a walk before we do the green-houses. Incidentally, Lena, you're looking extremely nice today."

She made no answer to this casual compliment. He had never realized what natural grace and individuality she possessed, with her warm complexion, dark hazel eyes and thick honey-coloured hair, her graceful figure and easy carriage. He was suddenly curious to know more about her.

"Tell me about yourself, Lena . . . your family . . . your home."

Gazing ahead towards the silver shimmer of the lake, she told him that she had been born in the east-coast fishing town of Sleescale. Her father, widowed when she was a young child, had been part owner of a herring trawler. He died when she was eighteen, and her two brothers sailed to seek their fortune in the wheat fields of Canada. Before they left she had come to the resort town of Astbury, some twenty miles east of Wortley, to work in the reception office of the County Arms Hotel.

"Didn't you like Astbury?" Paul asked, after a moment.

"Very much."

"But you left?"

"Yes."

It seemed odd that she should abandon a position as hotel receptionist in favour of her present job in a cheap cafeteria. Yet that was her affair, and, since her manner had become withdrawn, he relinquished the subject. They went on towards the glass-houses where, tier upon tier, masses of exotic blossoms were banked.

As they went round the beautiful collection, Paul was struck by the reaction of his companion. For once, the cloud of sadness that hung over her was lifted and she began to talk about the specimens with animation. When they stood before a young orange tree, she gazed at it as though its fragrant beauty had pierced her through and through. Watching her, he saw tears form beneath her lashes. Unexpectedly, his heart swelled.

They had tea in the Japanese pagoda which served as a restaurant. It was a draughty little place and the tea was weak, but their sense of comradeship loosened their tongues, made them forget the inadequacies of the meal.

"You haven't asked why I'm at the Bonanza." He spoke suddenly, unexpectedly, after a pause.

"No," she answered, adding, "I imagine you have a reason for being there. Some kind of trouble?"

He nodded.

"I hope it's going to be all right," she said in a low voice.

Something in the simple words touched him. Her profile, severe and sad like a young madonna, was lit by the lingering twilight.

Presently they left the Gardens and set out on the journey back to Ware Place. Lena seemed to be debating some question in her mind and



once or twice she glanced at him as though about to speak. Outside Mrs. Hanley's house they drew up.

"It's been a wonderful afternoon," she said. "I enjoyed it very much. Thank you for taking me."

She hesitated, her eyes searching his face, her breath coming faster as though an inner desire to communicate with him had suddenly become intense.

"Paul . . ." It was the first time she had used his Christian name. "Yes?"

She glanced at him, then away, affected by an actual physical distress. "Oh, it doesn't matter. Never mind."

Whatever it was that she wished to say, she simply could not say it. Instead, hurriedly, she murmured: "Good night."

Then she turned and walked quickly up to the house.

Paul stood for a moment, perplexed. At last he moved off.

It was about six o'clock when he got back to his lodgings, with the *Sunday Courier*. He opened it with his usual anticipation.

At first he thought he had again drawn a blank. But, at the foot of a column, the name he had been seeking leaped at him from the printed page. The paragraph was quite short.

In the House of Commons, Mr. George Birley (Wortley, Liberal) raised the question of the case of Rees Mathry, now undergoing a term of life imprisonment in Stoneheath Prison. Was it not a fact, asked the right honourable gentleman, that the new evidence which he had brought forward might demand a reconsideration of the case? Moreover, in view of the fact that Mathry had already served fifteen years, was he not now due to be released?

Replying, Sir Walter Hamilton (Home Secretary) stated that the answer to both questions was in the negative. In the first place, he saw no reason whatsoever to interfere with the normal processes of justice, and, in the second, the prison record of the man Mathry was so bad that he had forfeited any right to remission. The matter should be considered as finally and completely closed.

Paul laid the newspaper on the table. There was a knock at the door and his landlady came into the room. She gave him a swift glance and handed him a special delivery letter.

It was from George Birley. Further action, he wrote, would be utterly

useless. He softened the blow as best he could, urged "his young friend" to put the whole unhappy affair out of his head for ever. It was a good letter, well-meaning and unquestionably kindly. It nearly broke Paul's heart.

NEXT MORNING, after a sleepless night, Paul sat at the piano and began doggedly to hammer out cheap music. He noticed a bunch of marigolds standing on his piano. Lena, obviously, had placed them there. When she brought his lunch he mumbled a few words of thanks.

His manner troubled her.

"Is anything wrong?" she asked.

"Yes," he answered, in a strained voice. "Everything."

Before she could question him further, she was called back to the cafeteria. As she moved away, Paul caught Harris watching out of the corner of his eye. Presently the manager strolled over.

"So you and the lady friend made a little expedition yesterday?"

"Expedition?" Paul's eyebrows contracted.

"Sure. The girls told me you was out together." Something between a sneer and a smirk spread over Harris's face. He leaned over the piano. "I thought I'd warned you about Andersen. Don't you know she had a child? And her not married, either. It was deaf and dumb, and died in some kind of a fit. Talk it over, next time you go out with her. She might give you the details."

In the pause which followed, Harris's sneer became predominant, then he nodded meaningly and walked away.

Paul's eyes remained fixed on the manager's retreating back. God, what a slimy type! So that was the reason for Lena's fits of sadness. Poor girl! Pity flowed into his heart; yet this pity was strangely cold, and somehow it quenched the small warm flame that had been kindled there. All the puritan in him was jarred and outraged by this revelation.

That afternoon wave after wave of bitterness swept over him. Poor Swann had been right—all hope of official help was futile, he must see this thing through on his own. And, by heaven, he would see it through. Whatever the risk, he must make a fresh approach to Burt—she now represented his only chance. If the authorities had rapped Mark Boulia over the knuckles, they had no grounds for doing so with Burt. It was just possible that she had not been warned.

IN THE evening he went straight back to his lodgings, took a plain paper pad and an envelope, and wrote :

Dear Louisa,

I was very upset at missing our previous engagement but it was not my fault. I hope you forgive me. Will you meet me next Wednesday at the Oak? Be there for sure, Louisa, round about seven o'clock. Looking forward to the pleasure of your society,

Yours,
PAUL.

Two days later he received this reply :

Dear Sir :

I would like to meet you only be careful and don't come round the garden nor the back door no more. Just be at the same place as arranged and I will try and be there. With my best respects no more no less at the present time.

L. B.

A cry of satisfaction rose to Paul's lips. Burt was still unsuspecting, the opportunity remained open to him. During the past forty-eight hours he had worried constantly lest Birley's action might compromise him further with the authorities. Now, with a sense of relief, he felt convinced that the paragraph in the *Courier* relating to his father had passed altogether unnoticed in Wortley. In this belief, unfortunately, he was quite mistaken.

CHAPTER 8

THAT same morning, at the precise moment when Paul received Burt's letter, a man of forty-five, slightly portly, stood after breakfast in the morning-room of his house, gazing through the window towards the wide lawn. From the adjoining room came the chatter of his two daughters and his wife, Catharine. But despite these cheerful signs of family unity, Sir Matthew Sprott's mood was irritable.

The entry of a maidservant, who began silently to clear the table, disturbed his train of thought. He went towards his study, frowning a little, pausing to stare absently at the finest of his pictures. He prized his

fine things—the Aubusson rugs, the Rodin and Maillol bronzes, the two Constable landscapes. They were so unmistakably the proof of his success.

He had risen, in his own phrase, “from less than nothing.” An orphan child, he had been brought up by an aunt, a gaunt woman who, begrimed every day with coal dust, eked out an existence as a pit-head screener in the impoverished colliery district of Gadshill. From the very beginning Sprott had been dominated by one desire—to succeed. The motto “I will get on, get on, get on” was engraved upon his heart.

He had chosen the law as a career, not from predilection, but because he sensed it offered the likeliest chance for power. He had entered the office of Thomas Hailey, a reputable county solicitor, as a clerk, and set out to make himself indispensable to his aged employer. At the end of five years, when he passed the final examination of the Law Society, he walked out and set up for himself, leaving Hailey, who was in poor health and quite dependent upon his services, in the lurch. But what did that matter?

Sprott had little money and few connexions and for many months after he was called to the Bar, he haunted the courts, a briefless advocate. Then a registrar’s appointment was offered him. He accepted it, but only as a springboard from which to make himself useful to those in power. Gradually, he became known as a man of intelligence and immense industry, with a specialized knowledge of criminal law. Better still, he was a good speaker, with a notable power, amounting almost to genius, of playing upon the emotions of the jury. In 1910, when the parliamentary elections came round, he enlisted under the banners of the Conservative candidate, Sir Henry Longden. When Longden was elected, Sprott received his reward. The Crown appointed him Recorder to the City of Worton.

For some years Sprott slaved there, a terror to the debtors, delinquents, and wrong-doers of the city. He cultivated, assiduously, the people who could be of use to him—and, indeed, when it suited him, he could be the best company in the world. Yet, despite all his efforts, preferment did not come to him. Would he never “get on, get on, get on”?

Suddenly there occurred a heaven-sent opportunity. A murder case, which had excited popular interest, was due for trial and it was decided to entrust the Crown case to Matthew Sprott.

This was the turning point of his career. He flung himself, with every weapon at his command, into the prosecution of Rees Mathry. His intention was to focus attention upon his own powers, to overwhelm with his brilliance, and, come what may, to convict the prisoner. And he succeeded.

Before eight months had passed he had resigned his recordership and, while retaining his provincial home, opened an office in London. He was more and more frequently called as Prosecutor for the Crown, a position which he filled so admirably that, in 1933, he received a knighthood. Now, at forty-five, comparatively young and full of energy, he felt himself poised for even higher flights. He had been asked to stand as Conservative candidate for Wortley at the coming election. Once in the House, the Attorney Generalship was not far away. And then, in time, might he not become Lord Chief Justice, perhaps even in the end achieve the highest judicial pinnacle of all—Lord Chancellor?

Of course, in such an upward struggle it had been essential to employ a certain ruthlessness. He had made enemies; it was said of him that he was a toady to the great, that with every upward step he had planted his foot squarely in the face of the man who stood beneath him. In particular it was whispered that as Prosecutor for the Crown he brought to bear too strongly his great native talents for directing the course of justice.

Now, as he moved restlessly about his study, the Prosecutor's frown deepened. That question on the Mathry case, raised so suddenly in the House of Commons, had occasioned him bitter chagrin. The implications had been in the highest degree disagreeable. Within a restricted circle there had been considerable comment. The thing had even come to the ears of his dear wife, causing her to question him, mildly.

The only truly disinterested passion in Sprott's life was his affection for his family, especially for his wife. She was no more than the daughter of a Wortley doctor, and in marrying her for love he had been for once inconsistent to his own behaviour pattern. Yet her gentle companionship, her sustaining admiration and sweetness of disposition had more than rewarded him. It was apprehension that his reputation might suffer some slight slur in her eyes which at this moment decided him.

He took up the telephone, and called Police Headquarters.

TEN minutes later Chief Constable Dale, in answer to the summons,

set out towards Grove Quadrant. At Sprott's house he was shown into the small study on the right of the hall.

"Ah, there you are, Dale," Sprott said, extending his hand. "You're well, I hope."

"Quite well."

"Good." The Public Prosecutor sat down and stroked his lip. "Dale . . . did you notice that bit of nonsense in the House . . . about the Mathry case?"

Dale was startled, but he concealed his surprise. "I did notice it, Sir Matthew."

"Of course the whole thing is absurd . . . political mud-slinging. Still," Sprott shook his head, "we have to watch out these days that none of the mud sticks to us."

Dale revolved his cap in his huge hands, somewhat at a loss.

Sprott continued to meditate: "That young fool . . . the son . . . he seems a troublesome sort . . . the complete crank with a grievance. The question is . . . what to do about him."

For a full minute the Chief Constable held his tongue. He perceived now why the Prosecutor had telephoned to him and a curious sensation of doubt, touched by a vague malice, took hold of him. Deliberately, he said:

"Do you wish to prefer a charge against him?"

"By no means," Sprott protested. He looked straight at the Chief Constable. "However, it might be that you could induce him to leave Wortley."

"I've already told him to clear out."

"Words mean so very little. I make no suggestions whatsoever. Nevertheless, you may find it possible, in your own way, to bring him to a more reasonable frame of mind."

Sprott rose to his feet and stood with his back to the fire-place.

"I have gone through the records of the Mathry case. We have nothing to reproach ourselves with. Nevertheless, with elections falling due in a few months, a scandal at this juncture might undermine confidence in the whole judiciary, and in the government as well. That is why this idiotic affair must be suppressed."

Sprott held out his hand to terminate the interview. As Dale stepped out there was no longer a flickering question in his mind. Somehow the

thought had changed its form, was now fixed, a thorn piercing his natural honesty. With a frigid face he muttered stubbornly to himself:

"There can't . . . there can't be anything in it."

Yet his voice rang bleakly in his ears, and he resolved to temper Sprott's injunctions. He would watch young Mathry, but would not molest him unless he contravened the law.

WEDNESDAY night was dank and dark, with a cold drizzling rain. Paul reached the Royal Oak shortly after seven. He went to the table Burt usually occupied, glanced round, and decided he had nothing to worry about—the place was about half full but no one was paying the least attention to him. Then, as his eyes returned to the door, he saw Burt come in.

He got to his feet, holding out his hand in welcome.

"Louisa!" he exclaimed. "It's good to see you again."

She gave him a restrained smile and a ladylike pressure of her gloved fingers, then arranged herself affectedly at the table. "I didn't ought to have come," she remarked reproachfully. "After the way you disappointed me before. I believe you was out with another young lady."

"No, indeed," he protested. "You're the one I'm interested in."

"So you say. You fellas is all alike." She patted the puffs of hair over her ears, and nodded an intimate greeting to the waiter. "The usual, Jack. Bring the bottle."

Paul leaned forward. He forced an admiring smile. "You look a treat tonight."

"Get away with you!" she said, but she was flattered.

"I hope you had no difficulty in getting here?" Paul said.

She straightened. "What makes you say that?"

"Why, you mentioned it in your letter, about being careful."

"Yes . . . so I did." She sat back and took a sip of her drink. "It's just that the housekeep . . . that Mr. Oswald is shocking particular about some things. He's very high-principled. You've surely heard of him? One of the biggest charity contributors in Wortley. Gives hundreds away to the hospitals every year, and in the winter puts up a free coffee stall. They call it the Silver King canteen. He's always treated me like a lady, else I wouldn't still be there."



"Then you've been there some time?"

"I wasn't more nor eighteen when they took me in."

"I'm surprised you never married."

Under his flattery she gave a conceited little smirk.

"The Oswalds keeps on saying what a good thing if I settled down. Well, I might one of these days, you never can tell. But at the present time, catch me! I like a bit of fun. Do you blame me?"

The pattern he had suspected was emerging clearly: the philanthropic Oswalds had befriended this girl, had done their best to keep her on a steady course. But despite all this, there existed in her mind a deep-rooted grudge against life. And suddenly he saw how he could use this to his advantage, to secure the very thing he sought. Controlling the

excitement that rose within him he murmured, "It seems odd to me that anyone as smart as you shouldn't have a better job."

"You're right," she nodded sulkily, her eyes filling with tears of self-pity. "The truth is, dearie, I've had a dirty deal. And after all I've went through. Oh, it was right enough at first. They put me in all the papers . . . photographs and everything . . . on the front page . . . just like I was a queen."

Paul laughed, with just the correct note of incredulity. She reacted immediately.

"So you think I'm a liar, eh? That only shows your ignorance as to the person you're addressing. It may interest you to know . . ." she broke off.

"Ah, I knew you were joking." He smiled and shook his head.

Her face went red. She brought her head close across the table. "Is it a joke to nearly get a man hung?"

"Oh, no," he exclaimed, in shocked admiration. "But you never did that?"

She nodded her head slowly, then tossed off her second gin.

"That's the very thing I done. But for yours truly, they'd never of got him. I was the big noise in the case."

"Well!" he exclaimed in an awed tone. "You could knock me over with a feather. I never dreamed . . ."

"Let that be a lesson to you"—she sunned herself in his open adulation—"as to the lady in whose society you find yourself. And I could surprise you a lot more if I wanted."

"Go ahead then."

She gave him a sly and amorous glance.

"That would be telling, Mr. Curious. Still, I've took to you. A perfect gent if I say so to your face. And it's so long ago . . . it can't reely hurt." She lifted her glass. "Well, here's how . . . chin, chin, and all the best. Now, suppose yours truly had somethink up her sleeve that could reely of blew the lid off. For instance . . . ever hear of such a thing as a bright green bicycle?"

"Bright green?"

"That's right, dearie. Bright green." She broke into a titter. "Green as grass."

"I've never seen one that wasn't black."

"That's what they all said in court. Laughed they did, when some old bird swore he saw the man ride off on a green bicycle. But I could of made them laugh a different tune. I knew my way around when I was a kid . . . I was always on the streets I was. I knew about green bicycles."

As she hesitated, Paul laughed incredulously.

"I believe you're making all this up."

"What!" she flushed indignantly. "You won't make me a liar. Just at that time there was a cycling club in Eldon made up of fellows what called themselves the Grasshoppers. And, just for swank, every member's bike 'ad to be a special bright green colour."

"The Grasshoppers?" He spoke with assumed indifference. "Then the man that owned the bike you speak of must have been a member of the club."

"Exactly. And the kind that might 'ave 'ad fancy tastes . . . and a fancy sort of purse . . . say one actually made out of a human being's skin. Do I shock you?"

Paul tried desperately not to show too much interest. Surreptitiously he refilled Burt's glass. He said, "Indeed you do."

"Now I ask you, dearie, what kind of a person would 'ave that sort of purse?"

"A crazy person?"

"Ah, go and lay an egg. What about a medical stoo-dent?"

"Good Lord," Paul exclaimed. He had never dreamed of making such a deduction, yet he saw that it was unmistakably correct. He recollected now that at Queen's University a few of the bolder anatomy students often removed portions of epidermis from the dissecting-rooms and had them tanned as souvenirs. There was a vibrant silence—Paul simply could not speak. Delighted with the effect she was producing, Burt gave a prolonged titter and took a fresh sip of gin.

"I could make your hair stand on end if I wanted. For instance . . . the fella the cops got their hooks on was married. All the girls that worked in the florist's shop where he dropped in occasional-like, they knew it, including Mona—that's the young woman what got done in. Now from what I knew about *her*, she'd never of got herself mixed up with a married man. She was too much out for a good match. . . . In other words the gent what got her in trouble was single. Furthermore, she'd been in the family way for a good four months. Now the fella they accused

'ad only known her a matter of six weeks. 'E couldn't 'ave 'ad nothink to do with the condition she was in. The very thing they blamed him for was impossible."

Paul raised his hand to his eyes to mask the emotion which overwhelmed him. In a hoarse voice he muttered:

"Why . . . why was this never brought out?"

"Don't ask me," laughed Burt. "Ask them what ran the show. They 'ad a lawyer there what tied everybody in knots."

The Public Prosecutor! At every turn Paul was confronted by this high official, the power which had crushed his father, ruthlessly, into the living death of Stoneheath. For the first time in his life Paul knew hatred and with a burning question on his lips he leaned towards his companion.

But at that moment a startling change came over Burt. Her eyes, looking over Paul's shoulder, were stricken with sudden panic.

"Excuse me." Burt spoke in faltering tones. "I've suddenly come over giddy. . . . I got to get out."

Paul bit his lip. It was maddening to be interrupted like this, just when he had brought Burt to the point of making the most vital disclosure of all. He spoke in a lowered voice: "What is it?"

"A copper."

Half turning, Paul stared at the square-headed man at the neighbouring table. Unconsciously, perhaps, he had been aware of the man who had not once in the past twenty minutes changed the position of the newspaper which half-concealed his face. But now, imperceptibly, he lowered it, revealing himself as Sergeant Jupp.

Paul took a grip of himself, turned back to Burt.

"It is a bit hot in here. A breath of air will put you right."

Before she could protest, he called the waiter and paid for the drinks. They stood up. Immediately, Sergeant Jupp got up, too, and, tucking the newspaper into his pocket, walked out of the bar before them.

Paul's nerves were jangling as he walked out with Burt. Would a hand be laid once again upon his shoulder, hauling him off to Police Headquarters on some trumped-up charge? He could see the policeman outside, waiting. Grimly, taking the wilting Burt's arm, he kept on his way.

"Just a minute."

Paul drew up, and faced the sergeant.

"I've been watching you in there. You're annoying this young woman." He turned towards Burt. "This fellow's been interfering with you . . . hasn't he?"

There was a hollow pause. Then, with a gasp, Burt shrilled:

"Oh, he has . . . askin' me to go with him . . . and all."

"All right. Clear out of here quick."

As Burt took to her heels Jupp gave Paul a meaning glance.

"Now look here, Mathry, we're not going to run you in. But the Chief wants you to know this is your second warning and he hopes you're wise enough to take it."

Instead of relief, Paul felt a blinding anger sweep over him. This assumed indulgence was harder to bear than actual injury. It was useless to follow Burt now. Breathing quickly, he swung abruptly into the shadows and turned the corner of the street.

As he walked home, his sense of outrage grew. His contact with Burt was irreparably broken: she would never recover from this scare.

CHAPTER 9

NEXT morning he had a clearer perception of what he had gained the previous evening. Interrupted though the interview had been, he had nevertheless obtained from Burt several vital facts. Reflecting deeply, Paul now realized that if the owner of the skin purse had been a medical student he must by this time, almost certainly, have qualified as a doctor. By checking the Medical Directory against an old list of the members of the Grasshoppers Club it might be possible to determine his identity.

Spurred by this fresh hope, Paul hurried to the store. At the Bonanza he found Harris waiting inside the main entrance. There were no customers in the shop yet. The assistants, including Lena, had their eyes on the manager.

"You're sacked," said Harris abruptly. "We've no use in this store for police suspects." Giving Paul no opportunity to answer, he swung round and walked back to his office. As he traversed the aisle the assistants busied themselves at the counters—all but Lena, who stood, pale and undecided, at her desk.

With a raw hurt in his breast Paul turned and went out of the store. At first, in a fury of resentment, he strode without purpose through the city. Gradually he grew calm. At least he was now at liberty to put his deductions of the previous evening to the test.

He stepped into a telephone booth and by consulting the directory discovered that the Cyclists' Touring Club had a Wortley office. In ten minutes he reached the building, and stood at the inquiry desk in the map-hung foyer.

The secretary received his inquiry, and taking up a handbook, flipped the pages. But her search was unproductive.

"We seem to have no present record of such a club, but if it's important, I might let you look over our back records."

She showed him into a small annex beside the office and indicated a rack of yellow and green paper-backed books.

Left alone, Paul went through all the handbooks for the past twenty years. There was no record of the Grasshoppers Club.

Discouraged, but undeterred, he reflected that if such a club had actually existed its members must have procured their machines from some local shop. He set out on a systematic tour of all the cycle shops in the city.

But, again and again, he was disappointed. No one had even heard of the organization. He told himself despondently that the whole thing must be a fantasy created by Burt.

At four o'clock in the afternoon, he had reached the outskirts of Eldon in search of the last address on the list of cycle shops. It was little more than a petrol station, but in the yard he perceived a few second-hand bicycles. Nothing could have seemed less promising; yet he crossed over and put the question to a man in overalls who was hosing down the concrete pavement.

"The Grasshoppers," the garage proprietor repeated to himself. "Come to think of it, when my father was alive, I heard him speak of them. I believe he used to repair bicycles they used . . . all painted green."

"Then he must have known who were the members. He kept some records?"

"Not him. Cash over the handlebars was always his motto."

"But there must have been a list of members somewhere."

"I very much doubt it. According to my impression, it was a group

of young fellows who were more out for a lark than anything else."

"If you find anything at all bearing on the club, please let me know," Paul said. "I'll be most grateful."

He gave his name and address and set off for home.

Fatigued by useless effort, he lost his way, and found himself unexpectedly in Grove Quadrant, a residential district given over to stately houses. Suddenly, as he trudged along, he noted a letter-box fixed upon an imposing gate, and his eye was caught by a small brass plate which bore the name: *Sir Matthew Sprott*.

Halted, transfixed by that name, Paul stared at the garden and the mansion. This was the Prosecutor's home. All that secret sense of accusation which had grown within his breast rushed over Paul.

Here was a man of paramount intelligence, a legal expert. How had it come about that he had ignored evidence of the first importance—the green bicycle, the skin purse, above all, the duration of the murdered woman's pregnancy? Had he wilfully ignored facts favourable to the accused and used all his power and personality to crush a feeble opposition and secure a conviction which he knew to be false? Rage and rancour rose within Paul, but he turned away and went on down the hill.

Back in his room he flung his coat on the bed and began, nervously, to pace up and down. He had proved that there was vital substance in Burt's story, but his inability to act upon it galled him. Just as he felt he could endure his restlessness no longer, there came a knock upon the door. When he opened it, Lena Andersen stood before him, poised uncertainly upon the threshold. Her eyes were wide and startled, her brows marred by concern.

"Paul . . . I'm sorry to disturb you . . . I had to come. This afternoon at the store . . . someone called to see you."

At the sight of her, so unexpected, his gaze instinctively had brightened. But insidious as poison came the recollection of what Harris had told him. Unconsciously, his manner chilled as he said: "Will you come in?"

"No. I have to get back at once. It was a queer little man who came—a Mr. Prusty, of 52 Ushaw Terrace. He wants you to call and see him tonight, no matter how late. He said it was terribly important."

"Thank you," Paul said. "You've done me a good turn."

"It's nothing. If there's any way I can help . . ."

Her sympathy swept him with an overwhelming desire to confide in her. But he would not yield to it. He forced a smile.

"Haven't you enough troubles of your own?"

She glanced at him inquiringly.

"If I have, won't I understand yours better?" For an instant her eyes held his; then she turned and was gone.

Immediately a sense of deprivation filled him. He was tempted to rush to the landing to detain her, but nine strokes from a near-by clock deterred him.

He took up his hat and coat, and set out for 52 Ushaw Terrace.

THE tobacconist was at home, wrapped in a thick woollen comforter. He poured out a cup of coffee for his visitor and insisted on sharing a meat pie, but despite this hospitality Paul had a strong suspicion that he was less welcome than before. Prusty kept examining him with surreptitious glances, and by a series of shrewd questions, managed to acquaint himself fully with Paul's doings in the past few weeks.

When he had done so he made no immediate comment, but his air was sombre as he selected and lit a cheroot.

"So that's it." He meditated, frowning. "No wonder I felt the whole thing was waking up again. For all these years it's been buried . . . now it's like as if, when you put your ear to the ground, you heard a faint stirring in the grave."

The parlour, darkened by the falling snow, seemed suddenly full of shadows.

"As yet it's all undercover," Prusty went on. "But there's omens and portents . . . there's a resurrection coming. I feel it even in this room." He cast his eyes upward. "And in the room above."

Paul suppressed a shiver. "Is it still unoccupied?"

The tobacconist nodded his head. "Blank empty." He paused. "It's got round, what you've been doing," Prusty went on.

"And it's penetrated to some queer places. That's the reason I asked you to visit me.

"Last Friday a man called to see me. I was out. Mrs. Lawson, the woman who comes to clean up for me, was here. She's a plain, sensible woman who doesn't scare easy. But the very sight of this man frightened her near out of her wits. His face was hard and dead white. His head

was cropped, down to the bone. Mrs. Lawson took her oath he was a convict."

"Who could it be?" Paul's lips were dry.

"Lord knows, but I'll lay you odds he came from Stoneheath. Before he bolted, he left a message."

Prusty took from his waistcoat pocket a paper which he unrolled and handed over. Paul read the words again and again.

Don't let them throw you off. Find Charles Castles in the Lanes. He'll tell you what to do.

Who had written this desperate message? Paul sat upright in his chair. What if this scrap of paper had come from his father's hands, delivered by a fellow prisoner who had been released?

The room was now almost dark. The gas fire cast no more than a glow upon the hearth. Outside, the darkness had intensified. Immersed in his reflections, throbbing with fresh hope, Paul sat motionless.

Suddenly, and without warning, there came the sound of a footstep upon the floor above.

Paul stiffened, and for a moment thought he must surely be mistaken. But no, the footstep was repeated, again, yet again, with a hollow, a mournful regularity. Paul sat up, his eyes fixed upon the ceiling overhead. Prusty was staring upward with equal consternation.

"You said the flat was empty," Paul whispered.

"I swear it is," Prusty answered.

With unusual agility Prusty sprang from his seat, rushed through the lobby and out of the flat. At the same time there came the slam of the door above, succeeded by footsteps descending the stairs. Paul's impulse had been to follow Prusty but now an exclamation, as of relief, from the outside landing, arrested him, half-way to the hall. He heard first a word of greeting in an unknown voice, then Prusty's voice. Then came some quiet conversation and finally a friendly "good night."

A minute later Prusty returned, wiping his forehead. He shut the door, lit the gas chandelier, then turned to Paul with a slightly sheepish air.

"It was our landlord," he explained. "The roof is leaking. He was up to see about it." Prusty drew his comforter tighter round his shoulders. "Sitting in the dark makes a man fancy things. I let my imagination run away with me."

"You didn't imagine this scrap of paper," Paul said. He rolled it up. "Can I keep it?"

"I'll be glad to be rid of it," said Prusty.

As Paul hurried back to Poole Street, his thoughts were feverish and confused. But now at least he had a direct and powerful lead—he would follow it to the end.

CHAPTER 10

STANDING in the doorway of his room, Paul's landlady scrutinized him doubtfully. "I'm sorry, but you're a week overdue with your rent," she said. "I'll give you till tomorrow evening. If you haven't got work by then, I'm afraid you must go."

Paul had no intention of seeking regular work, and had not more than ten shillings in his pocket. Yet he did not wish to victimize her. When she had gone he considered his few possessions. If she sold them, they would perhaps pay what he owed her. Beyond what he was wearing, he took only his papers relating to the case, stowing them carefully in his inside pocket. Then, with a last look round, he went out.

The Lanes, which he reached towards ten o'clock, was the name given to one of the worst sections of the city, a network of narrow, twisted streets, hemmed in by tall, dilapidated buildings. All that day Paul combed these streets trying, without success, to locate the man named Castles. When evening came he made his way to the heart of the district, where for ninepence he was admitted to a workmen's lodging-house.

The beds were strips of sacking, stretched out like low hammocks on two long ropes. At one end was a kitchen where a crowd of ragged men armed with frying pans were pushing for places to cook their supper.

With a glance towards this crowd Paul stretched himself on his hammock, and pulled up the thin worn grey blanket.

"Don't you want no dinner, mate? I'll cook for both, mate, if you have a bit of grub about you." Paul turned to see an under-sized man with a shrunk, humorous face in the next hammock.

"Sorry," Paul said. "I had something before I came in."

"Ah, you're lucky, mate. Me, I could eat an ox."

Paul leaned towards him. "I'm looking for a man called Castles. Have you ever heard of him?"

"Charlie Castles? Sure, I've heard of him. Who ain't?"

"Where can I find him?"

"He's away for the present. Like enough on a job. Should be back in a few days. You know who he is, don't you?"

Paul shook his head.

"He's a wrong 'un all right . . . welsher on the racecourses . . . fence for stolen property in his spare time. He's just new out on parole after a long stretch in Stoneheath."

Paul drew in his breath sharply.

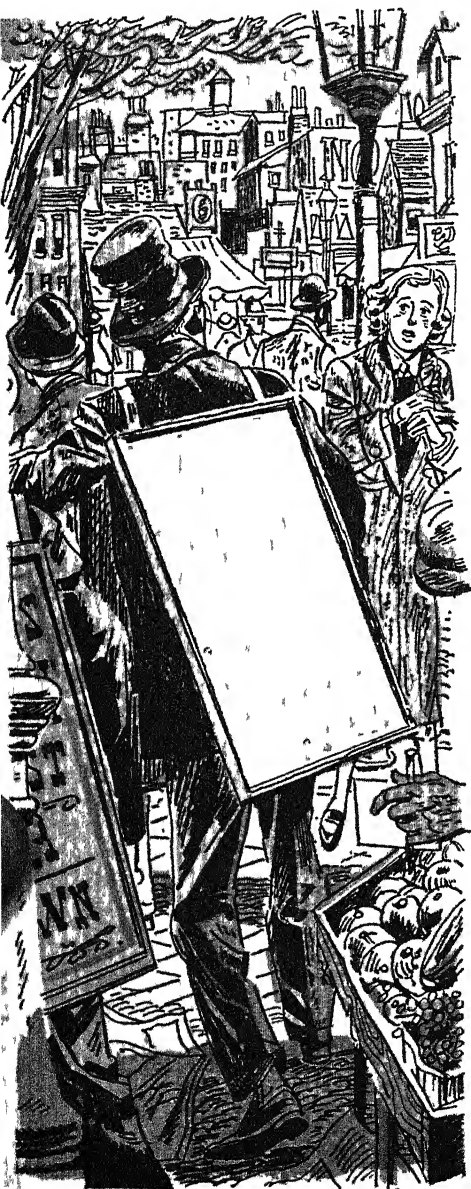
NEXT MORNING his neighbour of the night before—"Jerry the Moke" was his name—was going to try for a day with "the boards." He offered to take Paul with him. At first, Paul was about to refuse. But to find Castles he had to keep in touch with his odd companion, and with almost nothing in his pocket he had to keep himself alive. He moved off with the other in the direction of Dukes Row.

They took their places in a line outside a dilapidated yard bearing the sign **LANE'S BILLBOARD AND ADVERTISING COMPANY**. After about an hour the gate was opened and the first twenty men, including Paul and his companion, were admitted. Inside the yard stood a row of sandwich-boards for The Palace Theatre. Imitating the others, Paul went forward to one of the double boards, lifted it upon his shoulders, and moved back towards the big gate. He fell in line behind Jerry the Moke.

All day long the line wove through the busiest streets of the city. The boards were heavy and awkward, and snapped back on the shoulder muscles. But at five o'clock the men were back at Dukes Row, where each one was paid two shillings and ninepence.

Every day that week Paul went out with the boards. It was humiliating work—to attract attention, the men had to wear some odd article of dress, and one morning Paul was sent out in a battered top hat. Towards noon, as he paraded along Ware Place, he saw one of the Bonanza assistants, Nancy Wilson, coming towards him. Quickly, he lowered his head, but not before she had recognized him, a look of startled surprise appearing on her face. He did not care. With the money he received he was able to exist.

But the blight of the doss house where he lived infected Paul, filled



him with a sense of desperation and despair. More and more he brooded through sleepless nights, his thoughts running with growing bitterness to the main instrument of his father's suffering, the Prosecutor, Matthew Sprott.

Towards the end of the week, Paul and Jerry were turned away at the advertising company's yard. Jerry shrugged his shoulders. "They often run out on us. Post the notices instead. We'll try the station."

Together they went to the railway station and, for the next two days, hung about on the chance of carrying a bag. The few tips he received kept Paul going until Saturday. On the evening of that day as they entered the doss house Jerry drew up short and pointed to a tall, sinewy man of about forty with a pale, narrow face and small eyes, a derby hat on his head.

"There you are then, mate," exclaimed Jerry, in a low voice. "That's Castles . . . and watch out how you use him."

LATER that night, in a small back room which Castles had rented, Paul faced this man whom he had so anxiously awaited. Despite Castles' unprepossessing appearance he was educated and of obvious intelligence.

"What do you want with me?" asked Castles.

Without speaking, Paul handed him the paper which Prusty had given him. Castles glanced at it carelessly, then handed it back.

"So that's what brought you."

"Who sent me that message? Was it . . . was it my father?"

"I daresay it could have been."

"Then . . . you knew him in Stoneheath?"

"Yes, we had adjoining suites. We used to tap-talk at night . . . when he wasn't in solitary."

"How is he?" The words came with a gasp.

"Bad. In fact, couldn't be worse."

Paul bit his lip fiercely. "Why was I told to find you?"

"Your old man knew I was getting out. Thought we ought to meet. He slipped me this bunch of drivel."

Paul took the papers the other handed to him—little more than soiled scraps covered with a pencil scrawl. But as he read the almost illegible words, his eagerness died. They were no more than protestations and complaints, offering no further evidence. Dully, he raised his eyes to Castles. "Then you can't help me?"

"That depends," Castles said slowly, drawing deeply on his cigarette, "on what kind of help you want."

"You know what I want," Paul exclaimed passionately. "To dig out a poor devil who's been buried alive for fifteen years."

"Never." Castles spoke disdainfully. "After fifteen years you haven't a dog's chance. Whoever did it could be a thousand miles away. Changed name. New identity. Maybe dead. It's hopeless." He waited to let his words sink in, his yellow eyes fixed steadily on Paul. Then he went on:

"Why don't you go after the legal killer . . . the man who really did Mathry in?"

"Who do you mean?"

"The man who prosecuted him—Sir Matthew Sprott."

Paul caught his breath. "For God's sake . . . who are you?"

"It's no secret—I'm in the records . . . convicted embezzler. At least, that's how it began. I only needed a little time to pay the money back. I begged Sprott for it. Instead I got seven years. So you see we're in the same boat, you and me. We owe everything to that one man. You've never met the gentleman?"

"No."

A strange light flickered in Castles' eyes. "The Assize Court is in session now, Lord Oman presiding, Sir Matthew Sprott prosecuting . . . wouldn't you like to see them?"

Staring at the other, Paul did not answer.

"It's such an opportunity . . . the last day of the trial. Surely you'd like to come with me tomorrow afternoon . . . and see how they do it? Mind you, this one won't be so exciting. Just a wretched little bawd who's knifed her lover."

"No," Paul said violently.

Castles' face hardened. "If you don't want me to help you, go your own way, and I'll go mine."

Paul could not reject the proffered aid. "I'll go," he said. "What time shall I meet you?"

ON the following afternoon, Paul met the ex-convict as arranged. Castles, who was shaved and respectably dressed in a drab suit, apparently knew his way about the Assize Court building. He led Paul through a side archway and up a broad staircase to a heavy mahogany door, guarded by an official to whom he handed two admission cards. The officer laid his finger on his lips, then directed them into a narrow public gallery. Below, lay the crowded court—the robed judge on his dais, the jury box, the witness-stand, and in the centre, the dock, where a young woman in a cheap shawl stood between two wardresses. Gripping the gallery rail, Paul leaned forward, his gaze bent upon Lord Oman. His lordship was an aged figure, stooped slightly, as though beneath the weight of honours. His face was haughty, fixed in implacable severity.

Castles pointed towards a figure rising at the front of the court.

"There, getting ready to speak . . . Sprott."

Paul looked at the compact form of the prosecuting counsel in curled wig and sombre black robe. He pursed his mobile lips, his fine eyes darting like an actor's and began to address the jury.

Sordid and wretched, the facts were of the simplest. The accused was a prostitute. She had, inevitably, a "protector," who lived with her upon her earnings, who, in fact, preyed upon her and often beat her brutally. One night, when she was drunk, she had stabbed him, then turned the knife ineffectually upon herself.

Sprott dwelt upon this miserable story in dramatic detail, indicating to the jury that no thought of extenuating circumstances should cause them to compromise their verdict. It appeared to Paul that the Prosecutor was revelling in the execution of his duty. When he concluded, with a final dramatic gesture, a thrust with the actual knife showing how it had pierced the victim's heart, he sat down amid a deathly stillness.

"Take a good look at him," Castles' hoarse voice was keyed to a whisper. "That's how he worked on Mathry."

Staring rigidly at the Prosecutor, Paul was conscious of a surge of extraordinary emotion. He thought of all the merciless and unwarranted vituperation this man had heaped upon his father. It roused in Paul's breast a wild thirsting for revenge.

Presently, the speech for the defence was over, and the judge had concluded his summing up. The jury retired.

"Four o'clock," Castles remarked, drawing back his pale lips. "Just in nice time for them all to have tea."

Paul's neighbour on the other side was eating sandwiches from a paper bag. "You two came in a bit late," he said. "You missed the best of the sport. You ought to have heard Sprott this morning. Gave it to her hot and strong. She'll swing all right."

The jury came back now, and the judge.

"Guilty!"

The little man had predicted it. But he had not predicted the scream from the poor wretch, cowering beneath her shawl, nor the fit of coughing which followed. His lordship, frigidly annoyed, was forced to wait until it ceased. Then the black cap—Paul stared as the crape was laid upon the judge's head—and with the words: "to hang by the neck till you are dead," fifteen years were rolled away. Paul felt all that his father must have felt.

"It's all over," Castles said, agreeably. "Not bad for a matinée."

In a daze, Paul accompanied him out through the wide forecourt. Already the newsboys were calling out the verdict. Castles put a hand on his companion's arm.

"Why don't we go to my place for a drink? We need it." He seemed trying to estimate Paul's reaction, cold and curious, as though he were watching an insect pinned beneath a magnifying glass. Yet behind that brow, Paul sensed emotions darker even than his own.

"All right." In his emotion Paul didn't care what he did, or where he went. They walked off together.

WHEN they got to his room, Castles poured out two drinks. Paul emptied his glass at a gulp and made no protest when Castles refilled it for him.

Placing his drink upon the mantelpiece the ex-convict stood for a moment observing the young man, conscious that the crisis was at hand. That unique combination of chances he had so often longed for was at last before him. Paul was a heaven-sent instrument of revenge.

At the time of his "disgrace" Charles Castles had been a district official for a large insurance company. A bachelor, with sporting tastes, he lived well, patronized the neighbouring race meetings. To such a man, astute and venturesome, it was second nature to gamble "on a good thing." Thus, when information reached him of an amalgamation planned between his own and a smaller company—a merger which would prove immensely favourable to the minor concern—he borrowed from funds under his control, and bought fifty thousand shares of the smaller company's stock.

The purchase was achieved discreetly, yet the amount involved was so large that a rumour reached the ears of the authorities. To Castles' dismay, an examination of his books was demanded by the competent official, who was then Mr. Matthew Sprott. Immediately Castles went to Sprott, whom he had often met socially, and, having freely acknowledged his culpability, asked him to stay the investigation for a mere ten days. Quite correctly, Sprott refused. Under his direction Castles was rigorously investigated, prosecuted, found guilty, and given the maximum sentence.

He had hated Sprott with a deadly venom ever since and had sought unceasingly for revenge without danger to himself. And now . . . after all these years . . . had come Mathry's son hell-bent on the melodramatic folly of "clearing his father's name."

Castles could resist no longer.

"I must admit you took it well this afternoon, making yourself go through with it," he said. "With everything gone wrong, I don't blame you for losing heart. You're battering your head against a stone wall. That's why I wanted you to see Sprott.

"He's the master mind. He's the one who put your father into

Stoneheath. *And so long as he's around you'll never get him out.*"

In the silence which followed, a vision of the Prosecutor, supremely self-assured, rose before Paul. A strange fever began to throb in his veins.

Castles continued as though thinking aloud. "Yes, Sprott is the one who did it. Yet how can you get at such a man? He is entrenched."

"There must be some way of reaching him."

"No, Paul . . . there isn't." Castles then hesitated. "Well, there's *one* way . . . go to Sprott . . . to his house . . . and square your account with him . . . but of course it's impossible."

Paul's eyes were dark and glittering.

"Why shouldn't I go and face up to Sprott? I can do it."

"Can you?" Castles questioned with intensity.

Paul stared back at him, in a dim perception of his meaning. The blood was pounding in his ears.

"Can you?" repeated Castles in a more insistent voice.

Paul nodded.

"It's the only way left for you to get justice. To take the matter into your own hands. If you do it, they can't hush up your father's case any longer. Everyone must hear about it. And Sprott, the conniver of the injustice, will be finished, done for. He deserved it, that's what they'll say. They'll say you were justified."

Paul got to his feet, goaded by these words, by all that he had witnessed at the trial, by the process of demoralization which for the past ten days had been brought to bear upon him. He poured himself another drink, and swallowed it down.

"Here," said Castles in a hoarse whisper. "In case they try to stop you . . . take this."

It was a black Webley automatic. Castles opened the door and Paul went out. He could feel the heavy weight in his pocket bumping against his thigh.

Alone in the room, Castles lit a cigarette, looked at his watch. A train for the North left in ten minutes. It was not wise to delay. He pulled on his overcoat and went out.

THAT same evening when Sir Matthew Sprott let himself into his house, he found his wife coming towards him in the hall. She kissed him, helped him out of his coat.

"Matthew, dear, there's a young man waiting in the library."

He raised his eyebrows. It was on the tip of his tongue to tell her that for anyone to be allowed to trespass upon his privacy was quite contrary to his orders. But, because he adored her, he said nothing. He nodded his head and walked towards the library.

Paul sat perfectly still as Sir Matthew came in. He looked at him, but didn't speak. For a moment there was absolute silence. Then Sprott said: "What is the reason for this intrusion?"

He was very angry. At the same time there was something else in his eyes. Paul could tell immediately that he knew him. "You've no right to come here. This is my private residence. You are trying to stir up trouble about a case that was judged fifteen years ago."

That remark revealed everything to Paul—the crack hidden away behind the grand façade. His brain suddenly became crystal-clear. He said slowly:

"When a matter has been waiting for a long time it becomes urgent. There are doubts about that case. There is fresh evidence which should be heard."

"Don't be a fool," Sir Matthew said. "A petition to reopen was placed before the Home Secretary, and he refused categorically."

"But you need not refuse," Paul said. "You were the Prosecutor. Your main duty is to see that justice is administered. The least you can do is to hear the fresh evidence in your official capacity."

Sprott was so enraged he could scarcely speak. But with an effort he took hold of himself. He spoke in an icy tone.

"I really must ask you to go. You simply do not know what you are asking . . . the technical difficulties, the repercussions."

Sir Matthew's features were fixed in a heavy sneer. But Paul could see again that vague misgiving, that secret fissure in the façade, and he knew that the Prosecutor must at all costs hide that crack. He would never, under any conditions, move to reopen the case. Still . . . he must give him one last chance.

"When a prisoner has served fifteen years of a life sentence . . . isn't it the humane practice . . . for him to be released? A word from you in the proper quarters would carry great influence."

The Prosecutor shook his head. He opened the door. "Will you go now? Or must I have you shown out?"

An uncontrollable rage came over Paul. Castles was right! Only one thing remained to be done. He stood up and started to walk towards the burly figure at the door.

"For the last time." His voice was barely audible.

"No."

He had his hand in his pocket. All the time he was talking he had been holding the gun. It didn't feel cold now . . . the heat of his hand had made it warm . . . as if it were part of him. His finger was on the trigger and he had the gun pointed towards Sprott. The Prosecutor suspected nothing. Paul was abreast of him now, not more than two feet away. He was not in the least afraid. He shut his eyes, holding himself tense.

Then, all at once, a convulsive shudder shook his body; agonizingly, he came back to reason, to himself. No, oh, my God, no, he thought in a stabbing flash of light. His grip on the gun relaxed. He opened his eyes, stared at the Prosecutor. As he met those hostile eyes, a faint smile trembled across his lips. While Sprott glared at him, he walked past him, out of the house.

There, in the darkness under the stars, he whispered brokenly to himself: "I didn't do it. Oh, thank God, I didn't do it."

CHAPTER 11

As the days passed and she did not see Paul, life had become drab and empty for Lena Andersen. She felt herself slipping back into a state of depression such as she had not known since the time of the calamity which had broken up her life.

In telling Paul that she had been happy in her position at the County Arms Hotel two years ago, she had spoken nothing but the truth. Astbury was a charming old town, a resort during spring and summer, and the hotel, run by a retired army officer named Prentice and his wife, was superior. The place and the work suited Lena—her prospects were good, she felt that she was liked by the other members of the staff.

Every other Saturday she had a half-day off. It was pleasant to take a train to Wortley and to spend the afternoon looking through the big department stores. At five o'clock she had tea, all by herself, then, flushed and bright, with her few parcels, she caught the six o'clock train to

Astbury. The distance from Astbury station to the County Arms was over two miles; the road was wooded. But this did not trouble Lena.

One Saturday evening in the late summer, Lena set out, with a cheerful "good evening" to the ticket collector, to walk from the station to the hotel. The road was in darkness, a stagnant, jungle darkness. Even Lena seemed to feel its strange oppression. She recollected that on the train there had been a gang of rowdies, and, contrary to her usual custom, she kept glancing back across her shoulder. When a dry stick snapped on the path behind her she hastened her pace to a run. Suddenly an arm was thrown about her neck. She struggled fiercely, with all the strength of her young body, but uselessly. She was thrown heavily and struck her head against a stone. Mercifully she lost consciousness. There were five in the gang that attacked her.

When she came to herself, Lena, with a gashed cheek and swollen eyes, staggered to the hotel. The outrage shook the entire community, but search parties never discovered the assailants.

Major and Mrs. Prentice behaved towards Lena with exemplary kindness, but when the first shock had passed, Lena could not bear the overt solicitude and covert glances. She wanted to get away. Though she told no one, she had discovered that she was to have a child.

At this time one of the guests at the hotel was a man named Dunn, a taciturn person, who came regularly to Astbury. Dunn, among other things, was a student of human nature and he studied Lena. He observed with unspoken admiration her silent, dogged courage, her desire to make the best of a dreadful business. He had the perception to realize what Lena's bruised spirit was seeking—to escape utterly, to lose her own identity, away from everyone who had ever known her. Without fuss, he arranged for her to get away to Wortley, to a Mrs. Hanley, an old friend whom he knew to be reliable.

Dunn was not a rich man, and he had a wife and children to support, but he arranged for Lena's confinement, which proved difficult and dangerous. The child was not normal; mercifully it died after a few weeks. But it was months before Lena, prostrated physically and mentally, was able to go back to Mrs. Hanley's.

Dunn did not offer to find Lena a job. He wanted her to get on her own feet again. But after she was engaged at the Bonanza, he often dropped in for a cup of coffee on his way to work. He saw with interest

that her only and unfailing remedy for the moods of sadness which so often weighed upon her was hard work.

This was the antidote which Lena now applied to her present melancholy. When she got home from the store each night she set to, scrubbed and polished the floor, laundered the window curtains, and worked on her two rooms until they shone.

At the week-end she looked round helplessly: there was nothing more to do. Restively, she went downstairs and sat in Mrs. Hanley's parlour, listening to the latest letter from the landlady's engineer husband, Joe, whose ship was to dock in Tilbury the following Monday. But her attention wandered sadly from his news.

"What's the matter, Lena?" Mrs. Hanley asked. "You're a bit off colour. I scarcely feel like leaving you. It's a shame Joe has to stand by the ship for the refit . . . all his month's leave, too."

"I'll be all right."

"Well . . . promise me you'll take care of yourself."

"I will . . . I'll slack off tomorrow. It's my Saturday off."

But Saturday did not noticeably improve Lena's state. On the next afternoon when she had seen Mrs. Hanley off at the station, a painful loneliness descended upon her and she wandered over to the Botanical Gardens.

She set off in a direction quite opposite to that which she had taken with Paul. For an hour she fought her inclination, but at the end she entered the orangery. Inside, she drew near the slender orange tree which they had viewed together. Her heart beat heavily. Tears fell upon her hand as she turned away.

On the following night she yielded with a shamed surrender to a feeling which had swelled within her. She went to Paul's lodging in Poole Street and asked if she might see him.

"He's gone," the landlady answered shortly.

Lena's heart missed a beat. "Where did he go?"

"I've no idea. The police came inquiring for him. I had to keep his things for the rent," she added.

A thought formed in Lena's mind. "If I pay you, can I take away his things?"

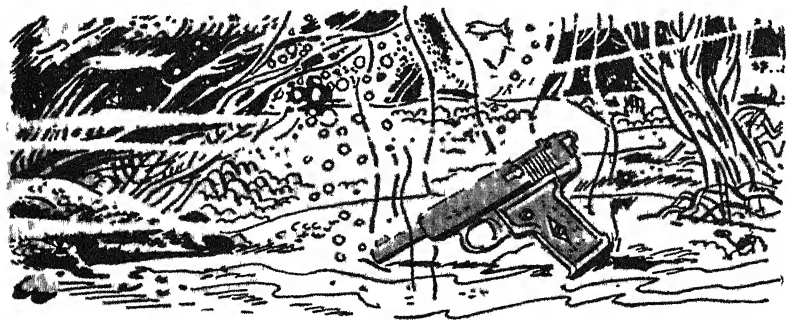
The landlady reflected. The opportunity was too good to miss. Finally, she gave an acid murmur of assent and Lena took home the few worn

articles of clothing. She washed and ironed the shirts, darned the socks, pressed the trousers. But when she had finished, she felt no better than she had before. More and more, she became convinced that some misfortune had overtaken Paul.

Next morning, at the Bonanza, she had word of him. Nancy Wilson related an incident with great gusto to the others.

"I tell you," Nancy spoke dramatically, "you could have knocked me down with a feather. I saw him, carrying a sandwich-board. At first I scarcely recognized him, he was that changed—thin and shabby, ragged in fact. But it was Paul all right. He suddenly caught sight of me across the street and he turned and slunk away."

It was then that the last of Lena's defences broke. She knew that she was laying up a store of future misery, yet she could not help herself. She began, frankly, to search for Paul. She combed all the poorer streets of the city, her eyes alert for his dejected figure. She tried the station, too. But in all her eager efforts she knew only days and nights of bitter disappointment.



WHEN Paul moved off from the Prosecutor's house, blindly traversing the silent streets, the night was cold and clear. One idea was uppermost in his mind. When he reached the canal he drew the gun from his pocket and hurled it far into the oily water. Numbly he watched the dark circles ebb in the moonlight.

At that moment the clock on the Ware steeple struck eleven.

The heavy strokes suddenly brought him back to himself. He realized that he was penniless. It became apparent that only one course was open to him. He had to sleep out. There was a place known as the Arches,

two cuttings under the railway bridge, where the homeless could sleep undisturbed. As Paul went towards this wretched spot he felt that all his respectability was gone.

When he arrived, other unfortunates had already settled themselves for the night. Pulling up his coat collar, he sank down in the chilly shadows with his hands in his pockets and his back against a round iron pillar. It was bitterly cold. Paul drowsed in fitful snatches. Morning came in a grey and sullen haze. So cold and cramped he could scarcely rise, Paul got to his feet and stumbled off. His stomach ached for food. Out in the street all he knew was that he had to keep moving.

In the late afternoon he found himself on the towpath of the branch canal. Here a bargee hailed him, and asked him to take the rope while his craft negotiated the hand-operated lock. On the barge was a motherly looking woman frying bacon and eggs on the open cabin stove. Perhaps she had a shrewd idea of Paul's condition. When he had pulled the boat clear, she handed him a thick bacon sandwich, hot from the pan.

This sign of kindness, the glance of pity that the woman gave him, shook him painfully. He had an overwhelming desire to abandon everything, to go home to Belfast. But he fought the impulse down. He would never give up, never. Rain-drenched, he made his way back to the Arches.

And now there began for Paul a period of intense suffering. Dependent always upon the chance of a casual coin, there were days when he went entirely without food. For brief intervals his memory would fail him, he would wander in a sort of stupor. Sometimes he forgot who he was. At other times he saw the people in the street merely as blurred forms and, blundering into someone, would murmur an apology before moving on. Through it all he had the notion that he was being followed and it was always the face of Jupp, the police sergeant, who watched from the shadows. Vaguely, he asked himself why he was not arrested. His clothes were soiled, his boots leaking, he had not shaved for days. His hair, uncut, fell across his collar. He wondered dizzily if it were possible to starve to death in this great and thriving city.

One evening as dusk approached he came upon a plain-looking wagon near the Corn Market, surrounded by a waiting, destitute throng. At five o'clock exactly, a flap board was let down, forming a counter. An attendant in a white apron stood behind this counter and as each man

advanced he handed him a bowl of soup and a hunk of bread. The warmth of the scalding soup flowed through Paul with a reviving glow. He ate the bread hungrily, then walked silently away.

This free canteen became the focus of Paul's existence. Every night he joined the waiting figures. The men never talked. When they had been fed they slid away, back into the shadows.

Then, after about a week, on Wednesday the usual attendant was joined by a man of about fifty, tall and erect, dressed in black, with a faint, yet kindly smile. Paul recognized him at once as Louisa's employer, Enoch Oswald, the donor of the canteen. Indeed, when Mr. Oswald removed his hat, his hair gleamed silver-white, a feature so striking it had earned him the name by which he was familiarly known to the outcasts who received his bounty. This, then, was the Silver King Canteen, of which Louisa had spoken.

He came slowly down the bread line, stopping at each man, not looking at him, never speaking, but pressing into his palm a new shilling. As Oswald stood beside him, Paul felt a deep longing, born of his own hopelessness, to enlist the aid of this truly good man who surely could not fail to help him.

The desire to reveal his identity to this man became overmastering. What a chance, he thought breathlessly. More and more he had come to realize that only through Burt could he pierce the mystery of the murder. And here, at his side, was the person who could compel the wretched woman to speak.

A kind of vertigo took hold of Paul. In his enfeebled state, the suddenness of the opportunity was too much for him. Words died in his throat. When he came to himself, his benefactor was gone. Savagely he cursed himself for his weakness, for he did not dare go openly to the Oswald home.

From the attendant he learned that the "boss" visited the canteen every Wednesday night, and he realized that in the following week, his chance would come again. The silver coin remaining in his hand was like a talisman.

The following days were hard to bear. In the smoky air, Paul developed a hacking cough.

Then Wednesday came again, and hope revived in him. He went early to the Corn Market and took his place at the canteen. Suddenly, as

he waited in the bread line, he became conscious of someone standing beside him.

It was Lena Andersen.

THE CHANGE in him was so great it moved her deeply. "Why, Paul . . . it's you." She pretended the meeting was an accident. "Why don't we walk down the street together?"

After a pause he said:

"This is where I have supper. I can't lose my place."

"I'm just going home," she said. "Come and eat with me."

"You mustn't get mixed up with me," he muttered.

Her gaze remained upon him. "Come, Paul . . . please."

He hesitated, torn between his weakness and his determination to await Oswald. At last he mumbled, glancing downward at his frayed trousers and cracked boots, "I can't walk through the streets with you like this. I'll come to your place later."

For a moment she considered him anxiously; then she slowly moved away.

As the attendant started serving bread and soup, it began to rain. Paul turned up the collar of his jacket and edged slowly forward, alert for Oswald's appearance. But when he reached the serving counter, Oswald had not yet arrived. Turning to the attendant, Paul said: "The boss is late tonight."

"Not coming till tomorrow," answered the other.

A cruel disappointment struck at Paul. He was counting so much on this meeting. The line forced him forward. He did not take his food. He moved off, dragging his feet along the pavement.

Lena remained across the street. At the corner she joined him.

"Come, Paul."

"In point of principle," he began vaguely. "Well, I really don't know . . ."

She was thoroughly alarmed now, and her hesitation vanished. She took his arm and led him away. He did not speak all the way to Ware Place, but she could see his lips moving from time to time, as though he were talking to himself.

On the landing, outside her little living-room she faced him.

"You'll have supper in a minute, but first you must change."

She showed him the bathroom, turned on the hot tap, brought him soap, towels, his own shaving things and clothing. He considered the garments with a strange fixity. "Whose are these?"

"They're yours," she said quickly. "Now don't ask questions. Just get ready."

When he came out shaved, wearing the flannel trousers and an open-necked shirt, her preparations were complete. She placed a chair at the table and set a bowl of soup before him.

He dipped the spoon in the thick broth and raised it shakily to his lips. When the bowl was empty, she gave him a plate of meat stew. He ate with such abstraction he did not see her watching him. He was painfully thin, but worse than that was the stiff deadness of his face. When at last he had finished he raised his head and spoke in a low voice.

"I haven't had a meal like that for weeks."

He got up as though to go.

Abruptly, she turned his chair to the fire. When he understood that it was for him he sat down, eyes bent upon the leaping flames. Occasionally his glance strayed round the room, absorbing the novelty and comfort of those four surrounding walls.

Observing him, while she cleared the table, Lena's lips set determinedly. The situation, in the absence of her landlady, was difficult, yet she did not shrink from it. When she had finished washing up, she quietly went out. Ten minutes later she returned, and came over to where he still sat staring at the flames. Suddenly aware of her presence he started. "Well . . . it's about time I went."

"Where?"

He tried to smile. "Back to the Arches, if you want to know."

"No," Lena said. "You're not going."

"But I must." He spoke with sudden agitation. "Don't you understand? If I don't get my place there in time, where am I going to sleep?"

"This is where you'll sleep," said Lena. "You can have Mrs. Hanley's spare room. And the sooner you're in bed the better."

She led the way to the room on the half-landing. The red curtains were drawn, the lamp was lit, the gas fire glowed, the covers of the comfortable bed had been turned down.

He rubbed his eyes slowly with the back of his hand as though unable fully to apprehend this cheerful warmth.

"Really," he said in a dazed fashion, "supper . . . and a bed. How . . ."

"Oh, Paul," Lena murmured, in a breaking voice, "don't try to say any more . . . just go to bed and rest."

"Yes," he agreed. "That's it . . . rest."

A gust outside blew a spatter of rain against the window. Paul shivered. He entered the room and closed the door behind him.

CHAPTER 12

DAYLIGHT was glinting into the room when Paul went into the kitchen next morning. Lena was already there, placing his breakfast upon the table. She had scarcely slept all night, thinking of Paul, so near to her at last, yet at the same time reproaching herself for the liberty she had taken in her landlady's absence. Despite the difficulty of her position her instinct was to keep him here, at least until Mrs. Hanley returned. She poured out coffee, gave him a boiled egg and toast.

Finally, as though taking his presence for granted, she went off to the Bonanza.

When Lena had gone Paul returned to his room. Freed of the misery of the Arches, he felt his courage return. He decided he must, after all, make an effort to see Mr. Oswald at his house.

At four o'clock he left the flat and in about an hour reached Brimlock Hill. As he went to cross Brimlock Drive, he encountered a man who stared at him curiously, stopped, turned and came back. It was Jack, the waiter at the Royal Oak.

"It's you," Jack exclaimed. Then: "I have something for you."

He pulled out a battered wallet, and began to search through it.

"Ah, here we are," Jack said. "I've had it on me for the last two weeks. Louisa Burt asked me to give it to you."

Paul stretched out his hand and accepted it.

"We don't see you around much lately. Down on your luck?"

"I'm all right."

"Well," Jack said, "I have to be going. All the best."

He shot a final inquisitive glance at Paul, then shrugged his shoulders and made off down the street.

As the waiter disappeared from sight Paul hurried to the nearest lamp-post. Holding the letter to the flickering light, he read:

Dear Mr. Smarty,

Seeing as how you thought you'd make a monkey out of me, as I've since been tipped off, I'd like for you to know for your own information that I am going to be married, proper, in church, and don't need your attentions nor promises no more. Arrangements has been made by Mr. Oswald for me and my husband to sail to New Zealand next month just like he done for my friend Ed Collins what was here before me, who I expects to renew my acquaintance with when I arrives. So you can think on me in comfort and luksury in a new land and I wish it makes you choke.

Yours,
Louisa Burt

Slowly, Paul lifted his eyes. Strange thoughts were rising in his mind. The street swam vaguely before him. As though his mind, dormant for these past weeks, had gathered its forces, he experienced a burst of power. He reread the letter. One phrase—vital, significant and terrible—stood out as though written in letters of fire: *my friend Ed Collins . . . here before me . . .* Why had he never thought of this before?

Louisa Burt had been in service with the Oswalds—that was an innocuous fact. But this fact became exceptional when coupled with the fact that another servant in the household had been Edward Collins.

How had it come about that these two young persons, the vital witnesses in the Mathry case, had both found positions with the Oswald family? Philanthropy might explain this. Yet it was a peculiar good-heartedness which sought to marry off each of the two servants, and to ship them away to the farthest corner of the globe.

Paul had a sudden vision of Enoch Oswald—tall and craggy, the dark eyes glowing benevolently beneath their silver brows. And then his whole consciousness seemed drawn and directed towards one extraordinary recollection—the voice of the man who had spoken with Albert Prusty on the dark stair landing that afternoon, the landlord of Ushaw Terrace.

Paul straightened in growing excitement. Impulsively he squared his shoulders and set off through the rain.

TWENTY MINUTES later he was rattling upon the second-floor door of 52 Ushaw Terrace. The letter slot swung back and Prusty's voice came through.

"Who is it? I can't see anyone."

Quickly, Paul bent down and revealed himself.

"I have asthma," complained Prusty. "Come back tomorrow."

"I must see you now . . . I must."

Grumbling, the tobacconist opened the door and admitted Paul. "What the devil do you want?" he asked.

"I won't keep you," Paul spoke hurriedly. "I only wanted to ask you . . ." His mouth suddenly was parched. "Who is the landlord of this house?"

Prusty, wheezing spasmodically, peered at his visitor.

"Why, you heard me talking to him that afternoon. It's Mr. Enoch Oswald. He owns all the Terrace. He's one of the biggest property owners in Wortley. He's kept my flat in nice repair."

"And the flat upstairs," Paul said. "He's kept that nice, too?"

"Of course he has," Prusty answered warmly. "What the devil has got into you? I can't stand here in my shirt-tails any longer." He began to press Paul towards the doorway.

"Just a minute. You remember you promised I could look at the flat upstairs. Well, give me the key."

Prusty's face was a study in annoyance. He seemed about to refuse, but abruptly he went into the kitchen and returned with the key.

"Here!" he exclaimed, curtly. "Now leave me in peace." He banged the door shut.

As Paul took the first step on the flight of stairs which led to the flat above, a better course of action flashed across his mind, and he slipped the key into his pocket. Not yet, he thought. He swung round sharply, went downstairs and hurried off.

A dreadful suspicion was forming steadily in his head. It grew with an urgency beyond his control, until it possessed him. Enoch Oswald . . . it was he who owned the flat which Mona Spurling had occupied. Since he conducted his business personally he must have seen her at least every month when he collected his rents. And if he had called upon her more often, who would question his comings and goings? He was the landlord. If Mona Spurling had been this man's mistress, who would have suspected it? If he had murdered her . . .

This was lunacy perhaps, yet his mind could not let it go, but kept piecing together the singular actions of this man. Even his public

benefactions now seemed a sham, or at best a form of atonement.

Almost running now, Paul reached the centre of the city, entered the Library, and applied himself to its reference books.

In a local publication entitled *Wortley and its Notables*, Paul came upon a full biography of the city's most prominent philanthropist:

Enoch Oswald, born 13 November 1885, only child of Saul Oswald and Martha Cleghorn Educated Wortley Grammar School and Nottingham University At first was intended for a professional career but owing to ill health, after two years at St. Mary's Hospital, abandoned his studies as a medical student

A thrill passed over Paul as he realized the significance of these last two words. He read on:

Thereafter . . . entered his father's business at the lowest rung of the ladder, collecting weekly and monthly rents

Despite recurrent attacks of indisposition . . . an interest in outdoor sports . . . in particular cycling . . . and for some months was a member of the short-lived Grasshoppers Club

The biography continued, but Paul could no longer read. He pushed back his chair with a clatter and, leaving the books littered on the table, dashed from the room.

Ten minutes later he ran up the steps at Mrs. Hanley's house. It was Lena herself who answered his knock. Even as she welcomed him, he said:

"Lena . . . I want your help . . . now, at once."

As Paul outlined in detail what he wanted, his words were so laboured, his air so unnatural, Lena wondered if he were not temporarily unbalanced. But despite the apparent absurdity of his requests, she obediently went into the kitchen and found a cardboard box, brown paper, string and an old note-book with some pages still unused.

She watched him as he wrapped the box in the sheet of brown paper, then tied it up.

Next he turned his attention to the note-book. Selecting a clean page, he filled in the first six lines in pencil with names and addresses.

"Oh, Paul," she exclaimed. "What on earth are you doing?"

"I'll explain later You understand what you are to do?"



"I think so. But Paul" Her voice shook. "There's nothing in the package."

"Nothing . . . yet everything." He glanced at the hall clock which indicated a few minutes to nine. "We may as well go now. Are you ready? The whole thing won't take half an hour."

They went out together and walked in silence to the Corn Market. The Silver King canteen was open, the long line of men was already in motion, and Paul saw that Oswald had arrived. He stood at the tailboard under the hanging electric light, his silver hair gleaming like a halo. Paul directed Lena towards the canteen.

As she crossed the street, the dryness in Paul's throat increased. He leaned forward, his whole body rigid. Watching, he saw Lena address the Silver King himself—he could almost follow the movements of her lips as she spoke.

"Mr. Oswald?"

The tall figure made a dignified nod of assent.

"I was asked to deliver this to you, sir."

Lena passed over the package, held the receipt book open for Oswald to sign.

The pencil was now in Oswald's hand.

For Paul, the moment was prolonged beyond endurance. Then Oswald signed the book. A long, slow expulsion of breath came from Paul.

For Oswald was left-handed. Enoch Oswald, ex-student of anatomy, member of the Grasshoppers Club, collector of rents, owner of 52 Ushaw Terrace, was the man.

PAUL never knew how he got back to Ware Place. When they reached No. 61, he sat down, supporting his head in both hands.

"Lena," he muttered. "There's something I must tell you."

While she listened intently, he told her everything. Although his voice was low, his manner held a seething bitterness as he concluded: "So now I know it all. And what can I do? Nothing. Whom can I go to? Nobody. When they wouldn't listen to me before, what do you think Sprott, or Dale, or even Birley would do if I went to them with this? There's no justice. So long as people are comfortable themselves, they don't care a damn about right and wrong."

Deeply moved, Lena shook her head. "No. If people only knew about this, they wouldn't allow it. Ordinary people are honest . . . and kind."

He looked at her with disbelief.

"Does your experience prove that?"

She coloured slightly, started to speak, then as though unsure of his meaning, was silent. But in a moment she took a deep breath.

"Paul! I'm not clever. Yet I think I know what you should do."

He stared at her.

She said earnestly, "There is someone you should go to. A friend of mine."

"A friend of yours?" The words sounded so preposterous in the face of his terrible dilemma, the solution so naïve that, in a fit of sheer hysteria, he began to laugh. Before he knew what was happening, all the anguish in his breast flowed over in a burst of choking sobs. Lena was deeply troubled, but afraid even to lay a hand upon his shoulder. When at last the spasm was over she said:

"You must get some rest now. We'll talk it over tomorrow."

"Tomorrow," he echoed in a strange, savage tone.

Alone, in the spare room he had occupied the night before, Paul sat down on the edge of the bed. His head felt hot, and he sensed vaguely that he had caught a chill. But the need for open and decisive action swelled within him and his natural balance and good sense were gone. He wanted to stand in the market place, to reach out his hands and shout of this iniquity.

At that thought, a gleam that was in part irrational lit up his eyes. Presently, he went over to the desk in the corner and took out the few sheets of white shelf paper which had been used to line the drawers. He laid the paper on the floor; then, taking pen and ink, he knelt down and blocked out letters in big capitals. When he had finished, he lay down, fully dressed, upon the bed.

Despite the project that filled his mind, he slept. About seven o'clock he awoke with a start. He had the same sense of fever in his veins, and his headache was worse, but he picked up the paper sheets from the floor, rolled them into a long cylinder and, treading warily as he passed Lena's door, went out.

The Lane's Billboard Company, at this early hour, was still deserted. He squeezed through a gap in the rotting wooden fence. Inside, the double poster boards were packed in a long, open, corrugated iron shed. Paul selected the newest board he could find, and using one of the many "brush pots" standing in the shed, pasted on his printed sheets. He was about to sling on the boards when his eye was caught by a rusty heap in the corner of the shed. He recognized the iron chains which had been used as an advertising feature for an illusionist. After some searching, he found a sound chain and a serviceable padlock. Five minutes later, with the chain round his body and wearing the sandwich boards, he left the yard.

The cathedral clock was striking eight as he started towards the centre of the city. People were swarming from the buses and subway exits. But only a few directed curious glances towards the young man bearing on his back the notice:

MURDER: THE INNOCENT CONVICTED

And on his chest:

MURDER: THE GUILTY FREE

Nine o'clock came and Paul still plodded along, clutching the heavy boards with rigid hands. Since he wished to avoid the police, he kept away from the main intersections. As the forenoon advanced Paul began to feel faint, but this parade was merely the prelude to his main intention. Towards noon, a curious crowd began to follow him.

Shortly after one o'clock Paul reached Leonard Square and here, at last, under the statue of the first Mayor of Wortley, he halted. He took off his boards and stood them on the pavement; then, first twisting the chain tightly round his waist, he padlocked himself to the iron railings at the statue's base. Immediately, since it was now the lunch hour, the press of people round about Paul increased. When he turned and faced the assembly he had an audience of almost a hundred people.

With his free hand he unloosened his necktie—it seemed to be strangling him. He was conscious of no fear, only of a desperate urgency to put his case before these citizens of Wortley. Lena had said that ordinary people were kind; he could never have a better opportunity to convince them. But his head now ached frightfully; worse still, his feet felt as if they were mounted on balloons, floating dizzily through the air.

"Friends," he began. "My name is Mathry and my father is in prison."

"You'll be there yourself, chum, if you don't watch out!"

The interruption produced a laugh. Paul waited till it died out.

"He's been in prison fifteen years for a crime he didn't commit."

"Ah! Tell that to the marines!" shouted a voice from the back, followed by shouts of "Shut up!" "Give him a chance!"

"I have proof that he is innocent but no one will hear me."

"We can't hear you, either, chum, unless you speak up."

"That's right. Speak up," cried others in the crowd.

Paul swallowed dryly. He realized that his voice was emerging faint and cracked. He made a superhuman effort.

"Fifteen years ago on circumstantial evidence my father was convicted of murder. But he did not commit the crime. . . .

"He did not commit the crime . . . in proof of which"

A dog was now barking so loudly, snarling and snapping at Paul's feet, that he could not make himself heard. Then the hound unexpectedly jumped up on him. Paul staggered and almost fell. A murmur grew among the mob.

"He's drunk. Paste the young soak." A banana skin flew through the



air; it was the signal for a fusillade of bread crusts and apple cores from people eating lunch in the crowd.

At that moment two policemen pushed through. One was a young constable, the other was Sergeant Jupp.

"What's all this? D'you know you're creating a disturbance?"

Paul gazed at the two figures in blue, vaguely recognizing Jupp. He opened his mouth to speak but no words came out.

"He's tight, Sergeant," a sycophantic voice suggested from the front rank. "Been talkin' a lot of rot."

"You've really done it this time," Jupp said. "Come along with us." The sergeant took Paul and started to pull him through the crowd. Then he noticed the chain. His muscular neck turned dark red. "He's padlocked himself. We'll need the wagon."

The two policemen struggled angrily to free the chain, tugging Paul this way and that, while the crowd pressed and milled round them. Another policeman arrived, then hurried off, blowing his whistle. Everyone seemed to push and shout at once, the traffic was held up, there was a general commotion. This was the moment which Paul had foreseen as the climax of his resistance, the crisis when he would deliver his most impassioned address.

"Friends," he tried to shout, "I'm only asking for justice. An innocent man . . ."

But now the younger policeman had broken the padlock with a blow of his truncheon and Paul was bundled into the police wagon. Half insensible, he scarcely knew what was happening to him until he was flung forward into a cell. His brow hit the cement floor with stunning force. The cell door clanged.

CHAPTER 13

IT was late afternoon when Paul again became conscious of his surroundings. Carefully, he pulled himself up and sat down on the plank bed in his cell. His head ached dully, and, to his surprise, he was finding it difficult to breathe; there was a cutting pain in his left side.

Suddenly, as he sat there, the cell door opened and a man came in. Paul recognized the Chief Constable of Wortley. Dale stood staring down at him silently. In contrast with their previous meeting, his demeanour

was aloof, but when he spoke, his voice was quiet and restrained.

"So you didn't take my advice after all. I told you to go home, but you preferred to stir up trouble. So here you are, just like I told you."

There was a pause. It seemed as though the Chief Constable were inviting Paul to speak, hoping he might commit himself through some ill-chosen word. But Paul had resolved to say nothing. His chance would come later, in court. He listened, with a queer sense of detachment, as the Chief resumed:

"And what do you think will happen to you now? You've been bothering decent citizens, pestering law officials, yes, even annoying Members of Parliament. Besides that," the voice became low, "you've been annoying me. I resent it. I resent your imputation that I've done wrong. And now you're going to suffer for it. You'll be up before the magistrate first thing tomorrow. It wouldn't surprise me if he took a serious view of the case and fixed bail pretty high—say fifty pounds. Now you'd have no means of raising fifty pounds, would you? That means you'll be remanded back here to us. Well, it's a nice cosy cell you have. I hope you like it. You might be in it for some time."

For a moment longer he looked at Paul, and then went out. But as soon as he was out of the cell Dale's expression altered. He frowned heavily. He had not been himself in there; he was like an actor who had given a bad performance and was now disgusted with himself. Yet what else could he have done? He had received an urgent message asking him to telephone Sir Matthew. Before he did so he must be in a position to state that he had seen the prisoner.

As he sat down at his desk the cloud upon his brow deepened. Hardened though he was, he did not like this affair that was back again upon his hands. He wished fervently the crazy young fool had cleared out. And again that whisper of uncertainty in his mind: "Is there something in it . . . after all?" He jerked his head back, angrily. No, by God, there was nothing in it. He could produce a record of honesty, of integrity that would stand the closest scrutiny. His hands were clean.

He stared at the telephone a long time before he could bring himself to dial the number. At once, Sprott came on the line.

"Hello. Sir Matthew?"

The Prosecutor's voice came back full of anger.

"What's the reason for this new blunder—this thing today in the

square? You ought to be able to use a little intelligent anticipation, once in a while."

Dale tried not to lose his temper. He answered:

"It wasn't easy for us, Sir Matthew. Who was to know what this young idiot was planning? However, he has gone over the score this time. He ought to get six months easily for this."

There was an odd silence. When Sir Matthew resumed, his tone was milder, full of reason.

"Look here, Dale. You were near the mark when you used the word idiot. There seems no doubt now but that this young man is a psychopathic case. If so," Sprott went on, "he becomes immediately a subject for treatment in one of our mental institutions."

"Ah!" the Chief Constable murmured.

"Naturally, to certify him, one would require some data. Tell me, Adam. Is he wild in his manner?"

"Yes," Dale admitted. "You could call it wild."

"And his friends? He has no one to take care of him?"

"He has a mother and a girl in Belfast, but they seem more or less to have given him up. He's been living on the streets lately."

"Poor young man." Sprott spoke with a note of pity. "Everything points to the need for institutional care. He'll come up before the police magistrate tomorrow morning, I presume?"

"Yes," Dale answered.

"Mr. Battersby, the magistrate, is a very sound man," Sprott said.

"He is," Dale said, in that same slightly unnatural tone. "If he fixes bail high enough we're sure of a remand."

"It might be well," Sprott said, "for you to explain the psychopathic aspects of the case to him, indicating that a remand would give us time to arrange a competent medical examination which, after all, would be in the young man's best interest." Then he added with great distinctness, "Make no mistake this time." He rang off. A full minute later, and slowly, the Chief Constable hung up the receiver.

THE police court opened next morning at ten o'clock. Paul was determined to speak out, to reveal everything. This time, nothing would deter him.

When he was escorted through a side door and shown his place on

the prisoner's bench the court was already in session and the magistrate, Mr. Battersby, had begun to deal expertly with the usual run of misdemeanours. The magistrate's lips were thin, moulded by his office to an apparent severity, but his eyes were wise and humane. To himself, Paul said: "This man will listen to me."

Suddenly he became aware that he was the object of a steady inspection. He looked towards the public seats and immediately saw Lena. She was not alone. Beside her sat a stranger, a man of about forty, very bulky, wearing a creased tweed overcoat which had seen much service. His battered soft hat was pushed back on his head, exposing a round bald brow. His face was round and chubby. Although his expression did not alter, he raised his forefinger and laid it against his lips. It was a trivial, short-lived gesture yet somehow its significance was overpowering.

At that moment Paul's case was called. He had barely time to think as he stood up listening to the charge rattled out against him. He observed that the Chief Constable had entered the court.

"Well, what have you to say for yourself?"

The magistrate looked down at Paul. There was a short pause. The flood of words Paul had planned was ready to gush forth but somehow, for some reason which ran contrary to his will, it would not come. He hung his head and muttered:

"I'm sorry, Your Honour. I'd had too much to drink."

There was a short silence. Paul could see Dale straighten himself in his chair. Mr. Battersby cleared his throat.

"Aren't you ashamed to admit it?"

"Yes, Your Honour."

There was a submissive note in Paul's voice which made the magistrate frown in perplexity. He examined some notes on his desk.

"Can you explain the monstrous poster you displayed?"

"No, Your Honour. I meant no harm. When people have had a glass . . . you know they do silly things."

Although Paul did not see it, a faint flicker twitched the lips of the man with Lena. The Chief Constable, sitting up stiffly, had half turned in his place. The magistrate glanced in his direction before putting his next question to Paul.

"Have you suffered at times from nervous attacks?"

"I don't think so, Your Honour."

Again the magistrate hesitated, redirecting his gaze towards the Chief Constable. At last he seemed to make up his mind.

"Young man, in the ordinary way I should fine you two guineas and dismiss you. But from responsible representations made to me, I am of the opinion that your case may be more serious than is presently indicated. I shall therefore fix bail at fifty pounds. Can you find fifty pounds?"

"No."

"Can you name any person who will guarantee the amount?"

Paul had begun to shake his head when the stranger rose.

"I am prepared to put up bail. L. A. Dunn, of 15 Grant Street. I have it here, in my pocket."

"I protest," said the Chief Constable.

"Silence in court."

"Your Honour," the Chief Constable persisted, his jaw hard and grim, "I request that the amount be raised."

"Silence in court."

The magistrate waited stiffly, refusing to proceed until the Chief Constable had resumed his seat. Then, in a seriously provoked tone, he announced: "This court wishes to make it quite clear that it is not subject to influence or suggestions from any quarter whatsoever. It sees no reason to reverse its decision. Bail will therefore be accepted in the amount of fifty pounds. Next case."

Fifteen minutes later, Paul walked out, free.

When he came into the street, he saw Lena and her companion, standing together on the pavement. The big flabby man approached Paul, hands in his pockets, hat on the back of his head.

"My name's Dunn," he said. "I'm a friend of Miss Andersen's. We were waiting to take you back to Ware Place."

HALF AN HOUR later Paul was undressed and in the spare bed; the pain still stabbed his left side. Wedged in a narrow wicker chair, and wearing his hat and coat was Dunn. Lena sat on a stool beside him.

"Feel better?" Dunn asked. Then he said, "I don't want to worry you when you're sick, son, but I understand that you've something on your mind. I've heard about it from Lena, who incidentally is quite an old friend of mine. If you care to get it off your chest"

Paul felt an encouragement to unburden himself of everything that lay upon his soul. He began to speak, stopping occasionally to regain his breath. When he finished there was a long silence. Dunn, who, while Paul was talking, had sunk lower and lower into the chair, slowly prised himself loose. He yawned and stretched himself and looked out of the window. "It's raining again . . . what a climate." He yawned again and turned to Lena. "Look after him. We have five weeks before he surrenders to his bail."

He leaned against the door for a few seconds, rolled his bulky frame round and, without a word, went out.

DUNN—his full name, Luther Aloysius Dunn, he concealed like a crime—had started his career as a sports writer on the *Wortley Chronicle*, a daily paper of limited circulation but high reputation.

For a time he reported only minor sporting events, but soon it was recognized at the main desk that he was good: vivid in his appraisals, graphic in his descriptions. One New Year's Day, when he was only twenty-five, he was given the choicest of all sporting assignments—the local senior league football game, which annually sends two-thirds of Wortley raving mad. Besides his news story, Dunn next morning turned in a feature article, which dealt with a single incident which had occurred during the game.

That afternoon James McEvoy, the editor and owner of the *Chronicle*, came wandering out of his office with the article in his hand. He sat down beside Dunn's small desk.

"What does this mean?" he inquired, tapping the article with his pince-nez. "I ask you to report a football match. You give me a story on a young half-back accidentally kicked in the head. While he's unconscious, you show me thirty thousand human beings yelling for his blood. You describe the shouts, the abuse, the bottles thrown at the players, the gashed cheek suffered by the referee . . . in a word, you give me a picture of jungle sportsmanship."

"I'm sorry," Dunn mumbled. "I started the machine and that's what came out."

McEvoy stood up. "It's the worst story I've had in a twelvemonth. But tomorrow it's going on the front page." While Dunn stared at him, he smiled. "I want you to come to supper at my house on Sunday."

That was the real beginning of Dunn's career. McEvoy sent him first to the police courts, which yielded much of that human incident so particularly suited to his pen. Then he began to move about the country and to do regular half-page feature articles signed: "The Heretic." They attracted wide attention—besides evoking two libel actions which the paper successfully defended. The circulation of the *Chronicle* increased, as did the friendship between The Heretic and his editor, a relationship which was strengthened, when McEvoy's sister Eva, who had for a long time bent her eyes towards Dunn, finally took possession of him. The marriage, though it did not cure Dunn of his fondness for beer and old clothes, was a steady success.

If Dunn had a motto it was: "Live and let live," yet in his own life he was always eager to redress a wrong, always ready to champion the underdog. Such inherent sentimentality made him highly vulnerable, especially to himself, for even at forty his nature was as sensitive as in his adolescence. Yet he could not endure to be regarded even remotely as a spiritual "uplifter," a reformer with a message. He was simply a newspaperman doing his job. Therefore he covered himself with a protective veneer of melancholy cynicism. It was a pose which probably deceived no one but Dunn himself. There were always tender patches of sentiment showing beneath the tough skin, but this good fellow did not see them and, like the ostrich, he felt himself secure.

When Lena had come to him after Paul's arrest, Dunn had thought he was setting out on a wild goose chase. But after the scene in the court-room and Paul's unmistakably authentic narrative, all his instincts told him that he had stumbled upon the greatest news story of his life.

For a week he did not once appear at the *Chronicle* offices. He was extremely occupied, and took several extensive journeys. Then, after eleven o'clock on the night of the following Thursday he came to the *Chronicle* building, locked himself in his office, and began to type:

In the damp darkness of the condemned cell, in this great city of Wortley, an innocent man sat waiting to be hanged. In a few hours they would come, pinion his hands behind his back, lead him out into the cold dawn . . .

Next morning, at nine, he rolled drowsily off the office sofa and took his typescript in to McEvoy. "Here," he said, "is the first of the new

Heretic articles. Also a complete synopsis of the other nine that make up the series. Read it. I'm going out for breakfast."

When Dunn returned, the editor was at his desk. He was a neat spare man, who prided himself upon his imperturbability, but now he was staggered. "How did you get this?"

"From Mathry's son."

"Are you sure it's right?"

"Positive. I've checked everything I've written."

McEvoy rubbed his thin jaw. He was worried, and excited.

"But it goes right through the top judiciary to the Home Secretary. And how about . . . how about Mr. O.? We can't come out with that. What about libel? We'll be sued for a certainty."

"Not a chance. Don't you see how I've planned it? We save him till the end. We don't particularize. We simply say Mr. O.—or, better still, Mr. X. Then we sit tight and watch what happens. It's the biggest thing that's ever come our way. Think of it . . . here's a man, fifteen years in Stoneheath . . . and for nothing."

"They'll never admit that, never."

"We'll make them." Dunn began to walk up and down the room. "We'll show them the power of a free press. We'll make them reopen this case. For months young Mathry has been battering at their doors and they haven't opened up an inch. Why? Because they know they've made a mistake. What the hell's the good of calling ourselves a democracy if we let ourselves be dragooned by a lot of bureaucrats? Everything that was done to young Mathry suppressed his right to be heard. If we are a free country, and want to stay free, a man must be able to raise his voice. If we suppress free speech even for a second, we're done for."

"All right, all right," McEvoy said sourly. "Don't quote the whole article. We'll print it, if it ruins us. And it will!"

CHAPTER 14

ON the morning after, when Dunn left Ware Place, Lena was forced to admit that Paul was worse. On each of his cheekbones there was a bright round flush. Lena felt a sharp sinking of dismay, stirred to the depths by an emotion for this young man she had thought herself incapable of experiencing.

"Paul," she said. "I think I'll fetch the doctor."

"No," he protested. "I'd rather be left alone. If you only knew . . . after everything . . . just to be left alone . . ."

She looked at him in indecision, torn between her sound common sense and a fear of outside interference. What was she to do? Still irresolute, she lit the gas.

Paul watched her with detachment. He had dozed off and on all day, and, in between, his thoughts had been of Dunn. He had little hope that this newcomer would help him. Indeed, the conviction had settled upon him that it was all quite useless.

He had reached the end.

In this mood of despair he thought, with unexpected pain, of Lena. Her close friendship with Dunn and the obvious understanding existing between them left little doubt in his mind as to their relationship. He now felt sure that this unobtrusive, middle-aged, married man was the father of her child.

It was a conclusion which made him wince. But a compelling desire to seek further hurt drove him to speak.

"Lena, you've done a lot for me, and I'm grateful."

"It was nothing."

"I suppose you've known Dunn for some time?"

"About three years."

"He's been good to you?"

"Yes. I owe everything to him."

Paul turned his face to the wall. "Anyhow," he said, "it makes no difference. I knew already."

She started and turned pale, made as though to speak, while her eyes questioned him with a miserable smile that unconsciously implored him. But she closed her lips.

Paul suppressed a short, throaty cough. "I'm afraid I do feel rather seedy."

Now she did not hesitate. Without a word, she hurried into the hall, put on her raincoat and went out.

Doctor Kerr's surgery was the nearest, only two hundred yards along Ware Place. He was soon back in the room, giving Paul a careful examination. When he had finished, he withdrew from the bedside and looked at his watch.

"What is it, Doctor?"

"He's had a dry pleurisy—that was the pain. There's lots of fluid pressing on the lung."

He gave her a quick look, then glanced away. "I'm afraid there may be pus there. Empyema. That means hospital."

Her colour changed. "You couldn't treat him here?"

"Good heavens, no. This requires a rib resection. It will take weeks. Have you a telephone in the house?"

"Yes. In the hall."

He went clattering downstairs, and she could hear him telephoning, stressing the gravity and urgency of the case. When she followed him down, he turned from the phone.

"They'll take him at St. Elizabeth's Home . . . a small place but quite good. They're sending for him now."

The ambulance came in a quarter of an hour. Ten minutes later it had gone. Lena began, from habit, to tidy up the room.

Paul's threadbare suit lay folded upon a chair beside the bed. She took it up, meaning to place it on a hanger in the cupboard. As she did so, Paul's battered old wallet dropped from the inside pocket, hit upon its edge, and spilt its contents upon the floor.

Lena bent to pick up the papers. Suddenly, among the sheets, her fingers came upon a small photograph and, instinctively, she looked at it. It was a portrait of Ella Fleming, extremely flattering—Ella had seen to that—and beneath was written a tender message. It was a souvenir Ella had presented to Paul upon his nineteenth birthday and which she had personally inserted in his wallet.

Paul had long since forgotten that he possessed the photograph. But to Lena it became, immediately, his most cherished treasure. In her motionless figure and fixed expression there was hidden an unfathomable anguish. At last she straightened from her kneeling position, returned the photograph to the wallet, and the wallet to the pocket. She hung up the suit and went into the kitchen.

Never had she imagined this contingency—so ordinary yet so unexpected—which had exposed the enormity of her presumption. She shivered at the thought of her needless struggle with herself. In her stupidity, mistaking Paul's gratitude for affection, she had almost brought herself to the point of exposing the tragedy of her life.

She could never tell him now. Never.

How long she stood there in anguish she did not know. All she wanted was to escape, lose herself, stamp out the memory of this supreme act of folly. She began to make her plans.

ON THE morning of February 21 the *Wortley Chronicle* carried on its front page the first of Dunn's series on the Mathry case.

Dunn walked down early to the *Chronicle* building. The newsboys were shouting the headlines. As he saw in huge letters the name MATHRY, a thrill of exultation went through him. When he reached the office, he could not resist saying to McEvoy, "I'd like to have seen Sprott's face—and Dale's—when they found what was being served for breakfast."

That day several of the distributors phoned in for extra hundreds of the paper. When he went out to lunch, Dunn saw people in the street, and in the restaurant he frequented, reading the article.

On the next day, about eleven o'clock in the forenoon the telephone rang. The second article, much stronger than the first, had laid a definite charge of error against the police. When McEvoy put the receiver to his ear his eyes rested on Dunn, then he nodded meaningly and his lips silently shaped the name: "Dale."

"Yes," he said. "Oh, good morning, Chief."

There was a pause. Dunn watched McEvoy's face.

"I'm sorry about that, Chief. Well, really, I don't see what you can object to. It's our job to print the facts. We've got some interesting new evidence."

A longer interval followed. McEvoy's answer was less amiable.

"We're not afraid of libel, or of any other action that may be brought against us. We believe that the public should know about this case, and we're going to see that they do know."

A final pause. The editor's eyes glinted behind his pince-nez.

"I wouldn't threaten if I were you, Dale. Try to keep your temper. You'll need all your self-control before you're finished."

McEvoy was slightly flushed as he replaced the receiver. He lit a cigarette to calm himself.

"He's angry. And badly worried. I thought it best to take a strong line with him. They're up against it, and I'll bet that tomorrow or the



next day we have a visit from the head man." He picked up a slip which had just been brought in to his desk. In a matter-of-fact tone he added: "It's all good for business. We printed an extra twenty thousand today. Every one of them has gone out."

On the following morning it was evident that people were beginning to talk about the case. The mail brought a sack of letters from readers of the *Chronicle*, and several other newspapers had commented upon The Heretic's series.

"It's begun." McEvoy handed the clippings over to Dunn. "But wait till they see what you say about Swann."

A young man came in. "Excuse me, sir. Sir Matthew Sprott's clerk is on the telephone. Sir Matthew would be much obliged if some time this afternoon you would come over to see him."

McEvoy stretched his legs out under the desk.

"Tell Sir Matthew's clerk we're sorry, but we're extremely busy. On the other hand, if Sir Matthew should care to come here, say that we'd be happy to see him."

"Very good, sir."

The secretary went out.

"He'll never come," said Dunn.

"Perhaps not," McEvoy shrugged. "But for the past fifteen years he's been frightening people; it's about time somebody frightened *him*."

The next two articles dealt, in no uncertain manner, with the suppression of the date of pregnancy, and with the peculiar manner in which the witnesses had been handled by the police.

Now, indeed, the avalanche was under way. Sacks of mail kept arriving at the *Chronicle* building, and so many telegrams poured in that McEvoy arranged for a special group of sorters. Some of the telegrams were abusive, but in the main the messages, from every corner of the country, were warmly congratulatory.

From the Reverend Foster Bowles, the sensational preacher of London, this:

WARMEST FELICITATIONS ON YOUR MAGNIFICENT CAMPAIGN. I AM
PREACHING ON THE MATHRY CASE NEXT SUNDAY EVENING. GOD
BLESS YOU, BROTHERS. BOWLES

"Why does he want to butt in?" asked Dunn, a trifle jealously. "He's nothing but a windbag."

McEvoy shook his head. "Bowles is a man we need. He'll knock 'em dead in London."

He took up the next wire. "Listen to this:

I INTENSELY APPROVE YOUR CONTINUANCE OF MATTER RAISED BY
ME IN HOUSE NOVEMBER 19TH. IN VIEW IMPENDING ELECTION
SHOULD APPRECIATE YOUR ACKNOWLEDGMENT MY EFFORTS. WILL
CONTINUE TO SEEK JUSTICE. SINCERELY GEORGE BIRLEY, M.P."

"Good old George," Dunn said, unsmilingly. "He wants to climb on to the wagon."

"And to slap back at his in-laws. The Duncasters spanked him so hard he almost went off his golf game." The editor took up another slip, studied it, then passed it across the desk to Dunn. "What do you think?"

Dunn read the telegram with a frown. It was from Lloyd Bennett, the editor of the London *Record*.

IN VIEW GREAT INTEREST HERE MATHRY CASE OFFER RUN HERETIC
ARTICLES IMMEDIATELY YOUR PRICE

"We'd better accept," Dunn said.

"Good," McEvoy said briskly. "I thought you'd agree. We'll ask a whale of a price."

"Oh, shut up, Jimmy." Dunn stood at the window. "This thing doesn't belong to either of us. Here we are, like a couple of bookies, getting a thrill out of the big race, and the lad that really did the work is stuck in a hospital bed, with two ribs missing and a hole in his lung."

"He's still pretty sick?"

"He's bad," Dunn nodded. "But they give him a chance. If only he were well enough to read my articles! They'd do him more good than medicine."

On the following morning the *London Record* carried a one-page supplement containing the first three articles of the series. The next day it brought itself in line with the *Chronicle* by printing another three. The seventh article appeared simultaneously in both newspapers.

It was late that evening, when Dunn and McEvoy were preparing to go home, that a boy brought in a teletype flash.

IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS MR. DOUGLAS GIBSON (L) MEMBER FOR
NEWTOWN, ROSE TO ASK IF, IN VIEW OF RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN
THE PRESS AND ELSEWHERE, THE HOME SECRETARY WAS NOT PREPARED
TO RECONSIDER HIS PREVIOUS DECISION IN RESPECT OF THE MATHRY
CASE.

REPLYING, THE HOME SECRETARY, SIR WALTER HAMILTON, SAID HE
WOULD REQUIRE NOTICE OF THE QUESTION IN WRITING.

In the office, the two men looked at each other, in electric silence. It had been a wearing day and the strain was beginning to tell on them.

"Notice of the question in writing," McEvoy said at last, with a queer cracked lift to his voice. "No point-blank refusal now. They want time to think. The wires to Wortley will be red-hot tonight. Tomorrow we may have a visitor."

They shook hands, silently and spontaneously, then took their hats and went out.

The following day was Tuesday, and towards four o'clock a knock sounded on the door. McEvoy's secretary, looking nervous, entered the room. Directly behind him was Sir Matthew Sprott. The Prosecutor, who was extremely well-groomed, had his usual expression of dignified aloofness. There was a slight pause.

"Won't you sit down," said the editor.

"Thank you." Sir Matthew took a chair. "You are difficult to get hold of these days, Mr. McEvoy. I happened to be passing and thought I would look in. I am fortunate in finding you here also, Mr. Dunn. My remarks to some extent concern you." There was a longer pause. "Gentlemen," the Prosecutor went on, "I must tell you that your current series of articles is somewhat embarrassing His Majesty's Government."

McEvoy and Dunn looked silently at Sprott. Behind his arrogance there was anxiety which he could not quite conceal. When he spoke again it was with unnatural heartiness.

"We are men of the world, gentlemen. I am sure we all three appreciate the difficulties of running the country in these uncertain times. And remember the elections will be upon us in a matter of three months. Now there is no question whatsoever but that His Majesty's Government is entirely sympathetic towards this matter you have raised."

"Indeed," said the editor.

"I can assure you of the fact." Sir Matthew nodded impressively. "I talked by telephone for an hour last night with the Home Secretary, and I am here to put before you a generous offer which should resolve this business and bring it to a just conclusion."

The Prosecutor moistened his lips and leaned forward.

"I am empowered to state that, if you will cease publication of these articles—which in the circumstances will be no longer necessary—Sir Walter will consent to pardon the prisoner Mathry, and release him from Stoneheath Prison." An altruistic smile seemed fixed on the Prosecutor's face. "Well, gentlemen, do you accept?"

"No. We refuse."

Slowly, Sprott took out his handkerchief and wiped the palms of his hands. "May I ask your reasons?"

The editor never took his eyes off him. "In the first place it would be a betrayal of the *Chronicle's* integrity if we compromised at this point. And in the second, one does not pardon an innocent man."

Sprott carefully restored his handkerchief to his breast pocket.

"You say 'at this point.' What is your ultimate objective?"

McEvoy answered in a level voice: "To obtain the unconditional release of the prisoner Mathry. To secure an inquiry into the circumstances of his conviction . . . and if there has been a miscarriage of justice . . . to procure damages for the horrible injury done to an innocent man."

The Prosecutor raised his eyebrows and attempted to smile, but his face remained fixed in a grimace. With effort he got to his feet. He said coldly: "I hope, gentlemen, that you will not regret this."

He inclined his head towards each in turn, and calmly left the room. But there was a grey look about his face, and he walked like an infirm man.

AT THE END of that week McEvoy opened the Mathry Legal Fighting Fund in the columns of the *Chronicle*. Contributions came in from all over the kingdom. The case was now a national issue. One after another, the newspapers of the great cities fell into line, demanding an impartial investigation of the facts. Writers and politicians, preachers, college professors, trade-union leaders, all joined their voices to the prevailing clamour. "Rees Mathry" societies were formed; Mathry buttons were manufactured and sold all over the country. School children who had not been born when the prisoner was convicted, walked in procession with banners: *Release Mathry*. In a free country, the feeling of the people may begin as a faint whisper, but expand with unbelievable rapidity to hurricane force. Then it is useless for those in power to stand against it.

Thus it was that one wet and dreary afternoon in March, McEvoy and Dunn suddenly heard a burst of shouting in the corridor outside. A moment later the secretary came into the room holding out a teletype strip. "It's come through, sir!" he cried. In a high voice he read out:

AT FIVE O'CLOCK IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS THE HOME SECRETARY ROSE TO ANNOUNCE THAT REES MATHRY WILL BE UNCONDITIONALLY RELEASED FROM STONEHEATH PRISON ON THE LAST DAY OF THIS MONTH AND THAT A PUBLIC INQUIRY WILL BE HELD AT THE WORTLEY ASSIZE COURT WITHIN FOUR WEEKS' TIME. THE ANNOUNCEMENT WAS GREETED WITH PROLONGED APPLAUSE.

McEvoy turned to Dunn. He felt flat and stale, caught in the backwash of reaction. "Well, we've won," he said. "And I'm tired. I'm going home." He began slowly to pull on his jacket. "We ought to be shaking hands and dancing the fandango. What's wrong with us?"

"Reaction, I suppose. We've been pretty hard at it. But Mathry's free . . . we've brought him back to life."

"I wonder . . . I wonder how Lazarus felt when he came back from the tomb." With these cryptic words, McEvoy shook his head, then departed.

Dunn went into his own room. He meant to call the hospital to give Paul the good news at once—this was a treat which he had looked forward to for a long time. But a thought restrained him. He smiled to himself and instead left the office.

At No. 61 Ware Place he found Mrs. Hanley returned from her trip to London, busy ironing by the kitchen fire.

"Mrs. Hanley," Dunn said. "Paul's father is going to be released. That's official. I want Lena to give him the good news. Hurry now, and call her downstairs."

Mrs. Hanley looked at him.

"Lena's no longer here. When I got back last week I found her rooms empty. She left a note to say she'd gone for good."

CHAPTER 15

THE MORNING of Paul's discharge from the hospital dawned clear and soft. Long before noon, the hour when Dunn had promised to call for him, he was ready. He had been acutely ill, but the rib was healed, the lung expanded, his cough gone, although his strength had not fully returned.

As they drove towards the city, with the balmy air streaming in through the open windows, Paul experienced a burst of thrilling anticipation. This was what he had worked and suffered for all these weary months.

"I've taken rooms for you at the Windsor," Dunn broke the silence. "Your mother arrives tomorrow and you might all stay there, till the inquiry is over. The *Chronicle* will take care of the expenses. No, don't thank me. Here's thirty pounds. You'll have to buy your father some

clothes and things. You can settle up if you want to when the indemnity is paid."

"What indemnity?"

Dunn gave him a sidelong look. "It looks as though your father will have a claim against the government up to five thousand pounds."

"You've seen him?" Paul asked, after a silence.

"He's at the hotel. Ted Smith, one of our staff, is with him."

"You think of everything."

"I wish I did." Dunn's manner held a certain brusqueness and he changed the subject. "Have you seen Lena lately?"

"No." Paul's face altered. "Not since she got me into hospital."

"You don't know about Lena," Dunn said abruptly. "It's about time you did." And, looking straight ahead, he communicated the facts to Paul, sparing nothing.

Dazed and shaken, Paul felt his throat constrict. How he had misjudged her! What a fool—what an insufferable prig he had been! When he could speak, he said: "I must see her."

"She's gone. She gave up her job and disappeared."

"Do you know where she's gone?"

"We didn't . . . but we do now. She's working as a waitress in a cheap restaurant in Sheffield."

"You have her address?"

"If I have, it's not for publication." Dunn spoke with finality.

The taxi drew up at the Windsor, a rambling building with several turrets and a red-tiled roof. As they went through the revolving door, ascended the green-carpeted staircase and paused momentarily outside the entrance to a suite, Paul felt Dunn looking at him as though about to speak. But he could not wait. Trembling with expectation, he pushed forward, through the doorway.

In the sitting-room, watched over by McEvoy's secretary, an elderly man was eating; a man of heavy and ungainly build, with a thick-set torso and muscular arms. His head, partly bald, covered behind the protruding ears by cropped grey hair, was round as a cannon ball, cemented into bowed and thickened shoulders. The skin of his neck was parchment yellow, seamed with scar-like wrinkles. He was dressed in a shiny brown suit, old-fashioned in cut and grotesquely small for him.

As Paul stood arrested, with beating heart, this total stranger raised

his cropped head and, wrinkling up his brows, still chewing, stared back at him with stony, hostile eyes. For an agonizing moment Paul could not speak. A thousand times, and in a thousand different ways, he had foreseen the meeting, the quick recognition, the warm embrace—he embellished the reunion with the beloved father of his childhood. Prepared though he had been for changes brought by the years, in all his imaginings he had pictured nothing remotely resembling this devastating transformation. With an effort he advanced and held out his hand. The fingers that met his own, after a moment's hesitation, were hard as horn.

"Well, sir!" Dunn exclaimed with a note of forced heartiness. "I hope they're looking after you all right."

The man at the table did not answer. He went on chewing as though bent, grimly, on extracting all the flavour from his food.

Dunn saved the situation by turning to Smith. "You've seen to everything, Ted? You didn't let the reporters bother Mr. Mathry?"

"No, sir, I didn't. . . . I handed out our prepared statement."

"Good." There was a pause. "Well!" Dunn exclaimed, shifting his feet. "You two haven't seen each other for some time. Smith and I will look in tomorrow. Call me if you want anything."

A wave of actual fright went over Paul. He would have given anything to detain the two others, but he saw that they were anxious to go.

When the door closed behind them he stood for a minute, then he sat down at the table. The stranger, this Rees Mathry who was his father, was still eating, bent close over his plate, and from time to time sending out that mask-like glance. Paul could bear it no longer. Almost incoherently, he began.

"I can't tell you how glad I am . . . to see you again, Father. It means a lot to me. Of course, after all these years . . . it's difficult for us both. There's so much to say. But the first thing is to get you some decent clothes. When you finish your lunch"

His remarks trailed off into silence. He was both startled and relieved when the other said: "Have you any brass?"

Although chilled by the crudeness of the question, Paul responded willingly. "Enough to go on with."

"I couldn't get a stiver out of that Dunn." Then, as though thinking aloud, "But I'm going to get money. I'll make them pay for what they've done to me."

The voice itself was rough, but worse than the coarseness was the frightful bitterness which pervaded it. Paul felt a further sinking of his heart.

"Have you a cigarette?" his father went on.

"I'm sorry." Paul shook his head. "I've been off smoking for a bit."

Mathry studied him, beneath those mask-like brows. Then, reluctantly, he produced a packet of cigarettes which Paul recognized as the brand used by Dunn. Selecting one, he cowered suddenly, as though to escape observation, and lit it. With the cigarette concealed in the cup of his hand he smoked rapidly, secretly. As Paul watched the intent brooding face he saw for the first time, almost with horror, its stony quality. The mouth, especially, was hard as flint, and shut like a trap beneath the long upper lip. Suddenly, and without warning, Mathry killed the glowing end of his cigarette and placed the stub in his waistcoat pocket. Paul stood up. He felt sick at heart.

"We'd better go out now . . . and do your shopping."

"Yes," said Mathry. "I want some good duds."

They went out to Leonard Street, where they entered Dron's, one of the largest outfitters in the city. The afternoon, as it progressed, became a nightmare to Paul. His father's uncouth appearance caused people to stare after them, and his rough manner on one occasion brought the young woman who served them to the verge of tears. Furthermore he insisted on having a suit of check material, made for a much younger man; the shirt he chose was of vivid artificial silk, the tie a loud yellow.

When they got back to the Windsor at six o'clock Paul sank into a chair in the sitting-room while Mathry took his parcels into his bedroom. He came back arrayed in his new garments and walking with an air of dogged vanity.

"I wish some of those swine could see me now. We ought to go out, have a spread and take in a theatre."

"We've only just come in," Paul said quickly. "We'll have dinner up here tonight."

Mathry looked at him, wrinkling the parchment brow.

"We'll have some whisky?"

"Yes, of course," Paul agreed.

Mathry stretched himself on the couch and opened the evening paper which he had made Paul purchase on the way back. "I ought to be in

there," he said. "They took photographs. I'm going to make them pay me for everything they print."

Paul ordered dinner and a bottle of whisky. He could scarcely touch it. Mathry, on the other hand, ate with voracity. When he had finished he poured himself a stiff glass of whisky. He carried this and the bottle across the room and sat in a high-backed chair, erect, in absolute silence, staring straight ahead at nothing, with a lowering intensity which was terrifying. From time to time he replenished his glass. He seemed utterly oblivious to Paul's presence.

As the silence continued, Paul gazed at the brooding figure of his father. How could this be the loving man who had led him by the hand to sail paper boats, taken the trouble to amuse him by sketching? What frightful process of brutalization had brought him to this state? As Paul strove to envisage all the grinding miseries of these fifteen years, a faint spark of pity strove to kindle itself within his breast. But it was stifled instantly by the awful reality of the physical presence across the room.

Suddenly Mathry glanced at the clock in the room.

"Nine o'clock," he said. "They're all on their nice plank beds now. They've been in the quarry, sweating their guts out, in the rain. There was watery soup for supper . . . lucky if they got a bit of gristle in it . . . and spuds . . . spuds that taste like soap.

"Some of them have smashed their fingers in the quarry, some have blisters and backache . . . they all have the rheumatism that goes with the infernal mist. But that don't matter beside what they're thinking. They're all thinking about the outside . . . trying to remember what it was like over the high walls. But maybe some of 'em are not in their nice little cells. Suppose they did something wrong. Then they're in solitary. Not even room to turn round . . . just two steps and you bang your skull against the concrete. That's where you really start to think . . . to wonder who you are . . . and where you are . . . and what you've done to get there. That's where you tell yourself you'll make somebody pay for what you've suffered. . . hate the whole cursed world . . . grab everything for yourself . . . if only the walls split open. Well, by God, they split open for me. So now you can guess what I'm out to do."

He stood up and, without saying good night, without even looking at Paul, went out of the room. His heavy tread was audible as he tramped along the corridor to his bedroom.

A groan broke from Paul's lips. Then by some process of association, his mind flashed back to a moment late that afternoon when, as they left the clothing store, his father had knocked against him in the crowd. Instinctively his hand flew to his inside pocket. All that remained of the money, some fifteen pounds, was gone.

NEXT DAY, in the clear morning light, the outlook seemed less sombre, and Paul was ready to face his difficulties with new determination. His mother was due to arrive from Belfast at eleven o'clock, and he felt hopeful that this additional support would improve the situation: time, kindness and affection could regenerate the most hardened heart. He took breakfast alone. Mathry was still asleep, and Paul decided not to rouse him.

When he reached the station, the express was just drawing up. And there, leaving the foremost compartment, was a little group—his mother, Ella, and Emmanuel Fleming.

Paul was startled—he had not expected to see the pastor and his daughter. Indeed they had been so long absent from his thoughts that he felt embarrassed and ill at ease. Fleming had his arm upraised and Ella was fluttering her small white handkerchief. In a few moments they had passed the barrier and were greeting him with enthusiasm. His mother's eyes were moist, Ella seemed loath to remove her gloved hand from his, while the minister smiled at him with understanding and approval.

As they set off along the street to the tram stop, Fleming and his mother led the way while Paul followed with Ella.

An excited colour tinged her wax-clear complexion; her short glossy hair had been recently curled. She wore a new dove-grey costume and a neat little grey hat beneath which her eyes gleamed. She began, immediately, in a confident tone, taking his arm.

"Well, I must say, Paul," she said, "we owe you an abject apology. Of course we thought you were just ruining your splendid career and blighting your life all for nothing, and we felt if we helped or encouraged you it would only make things worse. . . . And then, look what happened. When the news came out, I nearly fainted. But I don't want to talk about me, though I suffered, too, in my own quiet way. It's your triumph, Paul, and I want you to enjoy it to the full. Naturally prayer must have been responsible, too, we both know that, and never a night passed but I

made supplication for you to the Throne." Her gaze grew fonder. "It's so wonderful, Paul: we're together again, with all our future before us. But of course in the joy of our reunion we mustn't forget your father. The poor, poor man. My heart just bleeds for him."

She broke off as they entered the tramcar, Paul bit his lip at this possessive monologue. Was he really as deeply committed to her as she made out? He thought of Lena and his heart sank.

When the four of them had found seats, Paul realized that it was now his duty to warn them of the change in Mathry. Only the pastor, staring out of the window as Ella resumed her flow of conversation, seemed to harbour a secret doubt. The two women were, as he himself had been, obviously unprepared. Yet, as the tram lumbered forward, Paul remained stiffly silent. There was in Ella's facile enthusiasm, even in the primly nervous anticipation that he discerned in his mother—who was also dressed in her best, with even a touch of matronly coquetry—a quality which, in some peculiar fashion, antagonized him and aligned him, not on their side, but with that dulled and brutalized man who awaited them at the hotel.

When they dismounted at the Windsor, he led the way into the hotel without a word. Upstairs, he threw open the door of the sitting-room and ushered them in.

Mathry had finished his breakfast and was smoking a cigarette. Clad in trousers and braces, his shirt unfastened at the neck, he sat at the table, which was still covered with soiled dishes. His expression was more inscrutable than ever. Watching the newcomers, he turned to Paul as the one person he recognized and tolerated. "What do they want?"

Paul sought for an answer. "They want to be with you, Father."

"I don't want to be with them. They left me to rot for years. And now I'm out, they crawl back to see what they can get."

The pastor took a step forward. He was pale, yet he seemed less discomposed than the others by this reception. In a low persuasive voice he said: "You have every reason to reproach us. We can only throw ourselves upon your mercy and ask you to forgive us."

Mathry bent his forbidding gaze on Fleming.

"You haven't changed. . . . I remember you quite well. I want none of your mealy-mouthed slush. Forgiveness!" His chapped lips drew back in a kind of snarl. "Did anyone forgive me?"

"I know you've suffered," Fleming said weakly. "You've suffered horribly. We want to help you to re-establish yourself in the bosom of your own family."

"I have other ideas." Mathry's face assumed a dogged insistence. "I'm not done yet. I'm going to enjoy my life. They've had their fun with me. Now it's my turn."

Drawn up short, Fleming gazed almost helplessly at Paul's mother who, with parted lips and an aghast expression, was staring at Mathry. So far she had not said a word. But now, compelled perhaps by an emotion from a distant past, she gave a cry and held out her hands. "Rees . . . let us try to start over again."

His look repulsed her even before she advanced.

"None of that." He struck the table with his fist. "It's all finished between us." His lips were drawn back in bitterness. "You were always snivelling, whining after me to go to chapel when all I wanted was to have my pals in for a glass of beer. I wouldn't come near you now if you were the last woman in the world."

She sank down on the edge of a chair, her head bowed, tears streaming from her eyes. Ella ran to her, knelt beside her and began to whimper in sympathy. Mr. Fleming still stood silent. Paul glanced at the bent figure of his mother. But he did not move towards her—it was almost as though once again he felt drawn, in sympathy, to his father.

Mathry got heavily to his feet and swept past them. The door slammed behind him, leaving nothing but the sound of sobs.

"Oh dear, oh dear," Paul's mother moaned. "I wish I were dead. We should never have come. We must leave at once."

Pastor Fleming, at the window, turned slowly. "No," he said. "We must remain for the inquiry. We failed him once. We cannot again."

CHAPTER 16

AT TEN o'clock on Monday the 25th of March, the Wortley Assize Court was filled to suffocation. In the public gallery the spectators were wedged together; the well of the court was equally congested. Sir Matthew Sprott, Lord Oman, and other notables were in reserved seats in front of the public gallery. To the left sat the Attorney-General, and other high officials of the Crown. To the right were counsel for the

appellant, headed by Mr. Nigel Grahame. Paul and his mother, Ella and Pastor Fleming, Dunn, McEvoy, and a number of their friends were in the front rows of the public gallery. Beside his counsel, where, against the wishes of his advisers, he had chosen to sit, biting at his lip as he broodingly surveyed the scene, was Rees Mathry.

Suddenly the buzz of conversation was stilled and a door swung open. Every one stood as Mr. Justice Frame, followed by one of the Judges of Appeal, came into court, imposing in their flowing robes. A moment later a voice was heard :

"Call the case of Rees Mathry against His Majesty's Crown."

Cramped and tense in his place, Paul drew a sharp, painful breath. He could scarcely believe that now, at last, the inquiry had begun. Nigel Grahame, his father's counsel, rose quietly. Tall, erect, and perfectly composed, the young advocate addressed himself to the bench. His tone was almost conversational. "My lords, on December 15, 1921, and subsequent days, Rees Mathry, your petitioner, was tried at the Wortley Assizes on a charge that on the 8th of September 1921 in the city of Wortley he murdered Mona Spurling. . . ."

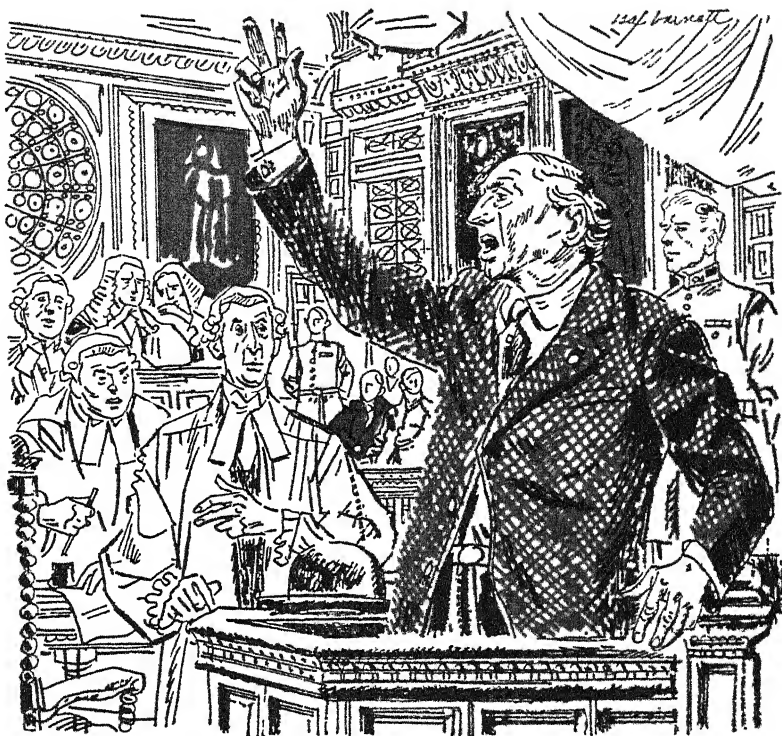
Surreptitiously, as Grahame proceeded, Paul observed the three agents of the law who sat near to him. Chief Constable Dale's profile was stolidly impassive; Oman wore a haughty and absent air; Sprrott was flushed but his look was firm. From these Paul's glance turned to the lonely and ungainly figure of his father, suffering again the ordeal of a public court.

"The petitioner," Grahame was ending, "desires now to prove that he is innocent and that his conviction constituted a grave miscarriage of justice."

Having completed his opening, Grahame paused a moment and then began his address.

Consulting the papers before him from time to time, he proceeded to analyse the facts in the trial and conviction of Rees Mathry. Familiar though he was with these searing events, Paul could not restrain a hot surge of feeling as, point by point, Grahame calmly and logically set down the details of the circumstantial evidence which had enmeshed his father.

The masterly speech lasted, with an interval for lunch, for nearly four hours. And, at the end of it, showing no signs of fatigue, Grahame



tranquilly pushed on. He bowed to the bench, and indicated that he desired to call his witnesses.

"My lords," he declared, "I propose in the first instance to call the appellant himself. At the trial, because of the unparalleled attack upon his character made by the counsel for the Crown, Rees Mathry was not afforded full opportunity to defend himself. But he will now give evidence denying all knowledge of the crime, and answering any of the questions relative to the charge."

Immediately, the Attorney-General rose in protest.

"My lords, I am anxious to assist legitimate inquiry in this appeal. But there must be no attempt to retry the case. I strenuously oppose the motion that the accused be allowed to give evidence."

Their lordships, upon the bench, bent their heads in consultation.

Presently Mr. Justice Frame announced their decision: "The court is of the opinion that the appellant's evidence would amount to no more than a repetition of his plea of not guilty. The court therefore is not prepared to allow this evidence to be received."

Leaning forward, Mathry had followed his lordship's words with increasing agitation. And now he jumped suddenly to his feet, his heavy figure trembling all over. To Paul's horror he shook his fist at the bench and shouted, in hoarse tones: "It's not right. I ought to have my say. How I was done down, how they treated me." His voice rose to the breaking point. "I want to be heard. I want justice . . . justice."

Gesticulating wildly, Mathry was at last forced back into his seat by Grahame and several attendants of the court who had hastened to restrain him. For some minutes there was a great commotion, followed by absolute silence. With great severity, Mr. Justice Frame bent his brows upon Mathry.

"I must advise the appellant that such conduct is not calculated to improve this court's opinion of his case. If it is repeated, I must warn him that he will be held in contempt of court."

Grahame, back in his place, deftly interposed:

"My lords, on behalf of the petitioner, I offer sincere apologies to the court for this outburst. And now, with your lordships' permission, I will call my first witness. You will recollect, my lords, from your reading of the case, that Dr. Tuke, the physician who was first to view the murdered woman, was not summoned to give evidence at the trial. My lords, in all your experience, you cannot name one other case in which the doctor who first examined the body was not asked to testify. Why was this crucial witness ignored? Dr. Tuke is now dead, but his widow is here today to answer that very pertinent question."

A ripple went through the court as Mrs. Tuke's name was called, and a moment later she went into the witness-box, a staid, elderly figure in black, a woman of unmistakable honesty and respectability. She took the oath, then turned towards Grahame, who began his interrogation in an easy tone:

"Mrs. Tuke, did your husband at any time express surprise to you that he had not been called as a witness at the trial?"

"Indeed he did. He said it was most remarkable. He said the authorities did not regard his opinion as relevant to the case."

Again a wave of interest went through the court and for the first time the attention of the spectators was directed towards Sir Matthew Sprott.

"Tell us, Mrs. Tuke," Grahame resumed, "in your own words, the views which your husband expressed to you upon the subject."

"Well, sir," the witness began, "Dr. Tuke always believed that the murder could not have been committed by a razor. In his opinion the instrument was quite different—sharp-pointed and piercing, more like a surgeon's scalpel. You see, sir, he found a deep penetrating wound at the right side of the neck, then a great slash, tapering away to the left ear."

"So he concluded that a pointed, thin-bladed weapon had first been thrust deeply into the great vessels of the neck, before the secondary slash?"

"Yes, sir."

"And a razor, with its round, blunt end, could never have achieved such a result?"

"That is just what he said, sir. He also believed from the disposition of the wounds, and the way the blood had splashed the rug, that the knife had been wielded by a left-handed man."

"A left-handed man," repeated Grahame with peculiar emphasis, and he gazed at his witness with a hint of severity. "Your recollection of that is quite clear and distinct?"

"Quite clear."

"That will be all, Mrs. Tuke. I ask my next witness to appear."

At a sign from Mr. Grahame the old lady stepped down, and the name of Professor Valentine was called out in court.

The individual who stepped forward was a short and officious man of about fifty. His complexion was sallow and from his high forehead there rose a bush of black hair which, worn long at the back, gave him the air of a second-rate impresario. After the oath Grahame began, mildly, "Mr. Valentine, you have, I understand, some knowledge of handwriting?"

"I am a professor of graphology," Valentine stated, with dignity. "I think I may say that my reputation as an expert is universally known."

"Excellent. At the trial I believe you testified that the note of assignation found in the murdered woman's flat had been written by Rees Mathry?"

"I did, sir."

"Would you tell us, Professor Valentine, how you arrived at such a very positive conclusion?"

"By the use of a magnifying glass, sir, upon the document in question and by enlarged photographs of the calligraphy, which I compared with the postcard admittedly written by the prisoner. I was able to reach the definite conclusion that the note had been written, in a disguised manner, by Mathry."

"In what manner disguised?"

"By taking the pen in the left hand."

"Ah! So the note of assignation was written left-handed?"

"Indubitably. And by the prisoner, Mathry."

"And by Mathry." Grahame smiled agreeably. "In your opinion there were three distinct points. First, that the writing was left-handed, secondly, that it was disguised, thirdly, that it was by Mathry. Would you tell us which of these findings you base upon fact and which upon personal deduction?"

"The merest novice, sir, could tell from the slope and configuration of the letters that the note in question was written disguised and left-handed. The third point, however, involved skilled technical knowledge of a high order . . . one might even use the word intuition . . . a sort of sixth sense which enables the expert to recognize a specific calligraphy among a host of others."

"Thank you, Professor," Grahame said quietly. "That is precisely what I wished to know. In point of fact, then, you affirm that the note was written, disguised and left-handed. But with your sixth sense, your intuition, you opine that it was written by Mathry. That is all."

The Professor opened his mouth as though about to speak, but seemed to judge it wiser to say nothing. As he stepped down, Mr. Grahame turned to the bench. "My lords, with your permission I will call Police-Surgeon Dobson."

Again, the Attorney-General was swiftly on his feet.

"My lords, I object. The Police-Surgeon was heard in full at the trial. Further evidence from him is not admissible."

"Unless," Grahame interposed, "it arises out of fresh facts."

A motion of assent was made, following which a dark-haired man with an athletic figure and an agreeable, virile face took his place in the box.

"Dr. Dobson," Grahame began, in his most winning manner, "you

have heard the theories of Dr. Tuke relating to the murdered woman's injuries. What do you think of them?"

"Rubbish." The word, uttered with a disarming smile, sent a murmur of amusement through the gallery. Paul caught his breath sharply. He doubted the wisdom of calling the Police-Surgeon and feared that Grahame would fare badly against this confident witness. But Grahame went on:

"Perhaps in general you are opposed to theories."

"When I find a woman with her head virtually severed from her body I find little need for theoretical speculation."

"I see. You conclude immediately that the lethal weapon was the obvious one—a razor."

"I did not once mention the word razor."

"But the prosecution produced a razor as the fatal instrument."

"That is not my department."

"Then let us return, if we may, to your department. What was your own conclusion, if any, in respect to the weapon?"

"That the injuries were occasioned by a very sharp instrument."

The surgeon was growing angry. Grahame smiled at him gently.

"So, as Dr. Tuke contended, the murderer could have used a thin, sharp blade, such as a scalpel."

Annoyance and honesty contended openly in Dobson's face.

"Yes," he declared at length, "I suppose he could. Provided he had some knowledge of anatomy."

"Some knowledge of anatomy." Grahame gave the phrase a thrilling significance. "Thank you, Doctor . . . very much. Now, you performed an autopsy upon the murdered woman during which you found that she was pregnant."

"I stated the fact in my report."

"Did you state the term of pregnancy?"

"Of course," the Police-Surgeon answered warmly. "Are you suggesting that I was remiss in my duty?"

"Far from it, Doctor. I am convinced of your absolute integrity. How long had the murdered woman been pregnant?"

"Three months."

"You are sure?"

"Of course."

"Thank you, Doctor. That will be all." Grahame, with a pleasant smile, dismissed Dobson, then turned to the bench.

"My lords, with your consent I will call my fourth witness."

A weedy little man came forward, thin-faced, bald, dressed in a check suit too large for his wizened frame.

"What is your name?"

"Harry Rocca."

"Your present occupation?"

"Stableman . . . at the Nottingham Race Course."

"It was you who, fifteen years ago, disclosed to the police the false alibi which Mathry attempted to arrange?"

"Yes."

"Where did you first meet Mathry?"

"In the Sherwood Pool Rooms . . . about January 1921."

"And later on you introduced him to the Spurling woman?"

"That's right, sir."

"Can you recollect precisely when this introduction took place?"

"Very well. It was the day of the big July Handicap at Catterick—run the fourteenth of July."

"Did you mention the exact day to the authorities?"

Rocca lowered his head. "I don't remember."

"In the light of the medical evidence, this date, which showed that Mathry had known Spurling for only seven weeks, was of the utmost significance. Were you not questioned about it at headquarters?"

Rocca shook his head. "I don't remember. They wasn't much interested . . . didn't seem to think it was important."

"I see. It was not important to prove that the most damning link in all the evidence against Mathry was an absolute impossibility. That will do. Thank you."

As Rocca left the box, Grahame gazed mildly towards the bench.

"My lords, my next witness is Louisa Burt."

She came in jauntily enough, and having taken her place on the stand, preened herself, then gazed round the court. When she had taken the oath Grahame addressed her in his most courteous manner:

"You are Louisa Burt?"

"Yes, sir. At least I was." She bridled consciously. "As you probably know, I just recently got married. I must say it was a surprise when

we was detained at the boat. But I'm only too willing to oblige, sir."

"You realize that the evidence you gave at the trial was of vital importance?"

"I done my best, sir," Burt answered modestly.

"Now, the night of the murder was, I believe, dark and rainy."

"Yes, sir. I remember it like it was yesterday."

"And the fugitive who came from 52 Ushaw Terrace was running very fast."

"He was indeed, sir."

"So fast, indeed, that he flashed past you in a second."

"I suppose he did, sir." Burt spoke thoughtfully.

"Yet you obtained a very clear and complete picture of this man. He wore, you said, a fawn waterproof, a check cap, and brown boots. Tell us now, how, in an instant and in the darkness, did you secure so comprehensive a description?"

"Well, you see, sir," Burt answered with confidence, "he run under the street lamp. And the light shone full on him."

"The time being twenty minutes to eight."

"Exactly, sir. I left the laundry with my friend at half past seven, and it's less than a ten-minute walk to number 52."

"So you are absolutely certain of the time?"

"I'll take my oath, sir. In fact I've already took it."

"In that case, how would you have observed the fugitive by lamp light? In that district, at that time of year, the street lighting was not turned on until eight p.m."

For the first time Burt appeared taken aback and, in a furtive fashion, her eyes sought out Dale, who sat in the well of the court deliberately averting his gaze from the witness-box.

"It seemed like the lamp was on, sir," Burt asserted, at last. "I took it all in very quick, it just burnt itself into my brain."

"Then why does this burnt-in description differ materially from the final deposition which you signed after repeated questionings at the police station? If I am right, you said the running man was clean-shaven."

"Yes," Burt replied after some delay.

"You made that outright statement, and it was published in the press." Grahame paused. "Yet Mathry, the man whom you identified at

Liverpool as being the fugitive, had a moustache which, in fact, he had worn for the previous six years."

"I can't help that," Burt retorted sullenly. "On second thoughts it seemed like he had the moustache. I told you I done my best."

"Of course," replied Grahame soothingly. "That is becoming increasingly evident. Well, we will leave those trifles of the unlit lamp, the moustache, the altered description of the clothing, and pass to an even more singular matter."

Burt's composure had gone. She kept searching for some encouragement from Sprott, then from the Chief Constable. Both grimly refused to look at her. Suddenly she saw Paul. Her eyes widened and a livid colour spread over her pale, plump cheeks.

"It is," Grahame continued, "the question of your association with Edward Collins. Were you very friendly with Edward?"

Burt burst into tears. "I feel bad," she whimpered. "I can't go on. I need to lie down. I'm just recently a bride."

Mr. Justice Frame frowned, suppressing the faint titter of the court. "Are you ill?" he queried.

"Yes, sir, yes, your lordship, I must have a rest."

"My lords," Grahame said reasonably, "with your permission, I am quite agreeable that this witness should be accorded some respite. But I must recall her thereafter."

After consultation, the judges consented. As Burt was assisted from the witness-stand, the court-room clock showed five minutes to four. Mr. Justice Frame adjourned the inquiry until the following morning.

CHAPTER 17

SPROTT made his way swiftly from the court by the private side entrance. As he hurried across the pavement towards his car, his mood was lightened by a throb of pleasure when he perceived that his wife was in the back seat. He flung himself in, lay back on the soft grey upholstery, and took her hand.

The day had been torture. Moreover, he knew there was worse to come. He said: "It was like you to come for me, Catharine. I knew I could depend on you."

She made no answer, but presently she withdrew her hand.

"It went not badly, considering." He spoke to reassure himself, as well as her. "Of course, Grahame was sensational—as we expected. He slung muck at us all—the cheap hound."

"Don't, Matt."

He bent towards her in surprise. "What's the matter?"

"I don't think Mr. Grahame is cheap. I think he's honest and sincere."

Sprott's florid face grew brick red. "You wouldn't say that if you had heard him today."

"I did hear him." She turned from the window and, for the first time, looked at him with pained and shadowed eyes. "I was in the gallery. I had to go. I went to support you, to hear you cleared of those vile insinuations. And instead . . ."

He stared at her. This was the last thing he had wanted. "You should have kept away. That court was no place for a woman."

There was a pause. He curbed his temper. "Well, never mind." He attempted to regain possession of her hand. "They'll throw some kind of sop to this Mathry and then it will all be over."

"Will it, Matt?" she answered, with a strange apathy.

The tone of her voice struck him like a blow. At that moment they drew up at their home. Catharine hurried into the house. He hurried in after her and caught up with her in the hall.

"Wait, Catharine," he cried. "What the devil's wrong with you?"

She answered brokenly: "Can't you guess?"

"No, I can't."

She gazed at him like a wounded bird. "All these years when I overheard people running you down I refused to believe it. I trusted you. But today, in court, Grahame was telling the truth, Matt. You sentenced a man to worse than death simply to get yourself on." She passed her hand in anguish over her forehead. "Oh, how could you? It was horrible, just to look at that poor wretch and see what he had suffered."

"Catharine," he exclaimed, coming nearer to her, "you don't know what you are saying. It's my duty to secure a conviction."

"No, no," she cried, "It's your duty to see justice done. Yet you employed every means to entrap and condemn Mathry."

"Don't be hysterical," he said harshly.

Although her lips trembled, she gave him a long intense look.

"Matt, have you not always known that he is innocent?"

At that word "innocent," which he had heard so often from the dock, but which, now, uttered by his wife, assumed a terrifying significance, emotion flooded over him, a strange commingling of anger, desire, and an abject longing to lay his head upon her breast and weep. He came close to her but she recoiled.

"Don't touch me."

The exclamation froze him. He watched her as she turned and went slowly up the stairs.

After a solitary dinner—his daughters had been sent away during the publicity of the trial—he mixed himself a large whisky and water in his study. The turmoil in his mind was something he had never experienced before. All that he had sought for and achieved, his rich belongings, his finely bound books, his beautiful pictures, seemed suddenly to have no meaning. He could think of nothing but Catharine. He strained his ears for some sound of her upstairs.

He took another drink and gradually, as his senses warmed, things looked less dark. Catharine was a highly strung creature, but she would get over this unlucky business. More than ever he had need of her. His pulse beat faster as he dwelt upon her gentle, loving favours.

It was now eleven o'clock and the house was completely still. He got up, switched off the lights and softly tiptoed upstairs.

Outside his wife's bedroom he paused, desire and a craving for sympathy welling within him. He placed his fingers on the handle of the door and gently turned it. It was locked. Dismayed, he called to Catharine in a low voice . . . then louder. There was no answer. Again he tried and again, twisting the handle violently, with his shoulder pressed against the panels. But the door was firmly secured. For a moment his thick body drew together in a paroxysm, as though to batter down the barrier, then, gradually, grew slack. The Prosecutor swung round and groped his way to his own room.

THAT same evening a singular compulsion grew on Paul. His mother and Pastor Fleming had gone to eight o'clock service in the nearby Gospel Hall; Ella, in a fit of sulks, had retired to her room; Mathry was already in bed. Paul sat alone in the living-room at the Windsor, prey to a strange premonition he could not dismiss. Several newspapers lay scattered at his feet. Rumours of Oswald's involvement had multiplied

rapidly and now the headlines proclaimed the latest sensation of the Mathry case. From his chair the black headline was clearly visible.

MYSTERIOUS DISAPPEARANCE OF ENOCH OSWALD

As once again he read these words, the impulse to act took stronger shape and form, until it proved irresistible. It was not yet nine o'clock. He rose from his chair, put on his coat and hat, and went out.

He turned his steps in the direction of Eldon and Ushaw Terrace. Presently he entered number 52, and mounted to the top landing, passing Prusty's flat. He knocked on the door of the fatal apartment: there was no answer. Taking from his pocket the key which Prusty had given him, he inserted it in the lock. It turned easily. Then he was inside and had closed the door behind him. In a firm voice he said: "Is anyone there?" There was no reply.

No lights were showing. He stood motionless in the tenebrous hallway, conscious of the cold stillness of the unused flat. He found a box of matches in his coat and cautiously struck a flare. As the match flickered he saw the open door leading to the living-room. He went in.

Once more he called: "Is anyone there?"

Again there was no answer. Perhaps, after all, he was alone in the flat.

He lit the gas in the pink frosted globe. Up until that moment he had been moderately calm, but now all at once he caught his breath. From the bedroom came the creaking of a board—a sound which, though faint, rang through the muted house like the crack of doom. A moment later, he heard a dragging tread upon the floor. Although he had expected this, Paul had to fight down a desire to turn and bolt as the bedroom door opened. Enoch Oswald appeared, dressed in his usual sober black, but dishevelled, with his tie undone, his hair streaked upon his brow, his eyes hollow and heavy. Like an apparition he came slowly towards Paul, stared deeply into his face.

"It is you," he said at last. His voice was deep and weary. "I felt you might visit me. I knew you had the key." He lowered himself into a chair and, with a measured gesture, indicated the place beside him. "Tell me . . . why have you come?"

Paul felt his mouth go dry. How could he explain what was in his mind? He strove to keep his voice even.

"I guessed you'd be here. I've come . . . to tell you to clear out . . . to get away at once."

Oswald's eyes, which had been blankly surveying the room, suddenly came to rest upon Paul. "You surprise me, young man. I fancied you were not particularly . . . well-disposed . . . towards me."

"I feel different now," Paul answered in a low voice. "What I've been through, what I saw in court today . . . has changed my ideas. There's been enough suffering over this case. They gave my father fifteen years of misery. What good will it do if they start all over again on you? You have twenty-four hours to leave the country. At least it gives you a chance."

"A chance," Oswald echoed in an indescribable tone. He was in a kind of rapture, his long upper lip quivering. "Young man," he cried suddenly, in a fervent voice, "there is still hope for humanity. Oh, now I am sure . . . sure that my Redeemer liveth!"

Unable to restrain himself, he got to his feet and began rapidly to pace the room, cracking the joints of his fingers, lifting up his head from time to time, as though in thanksgiving. At last he resumed his seat, and gripped Paul tightly by the arm.

"My dear young man, besides my gratitude, I owe you an explanation. It is only your due that you should hear the whole tragic story."

Still holding Paul in that iron grasp he stared into his eyes and, after a silence, hoarsely began, in a manner so archaic, so scriptural in tone, that it crossed the border-line of reason.

"I have all my life endured a visitation from Above. From my earliest childhood, I have been an epileptic." He paused to draw a deep sigh, then went on:

"I was brought up in a sheltered manner, and educated by a tutor. But since my tastes lay towards medicine I was sent at the age of nineteen to the University, and thence to St. Mary's Hospital. Alas, my disorder finally cut short my medical studies. I was forced to return home. Then, gradually, once I had passed my twenty-fifth year, my nervous attacks diminished and almost disappeared, and I was able to take my place in my father's business. I became engaged to a lady of fine character."

Oswald paused, and another sigh racked his chest. "During this period, I became acquainted with the woman Spurling when, by sheer chance, I went to a florist's to order flowers for my fiancée. I shall

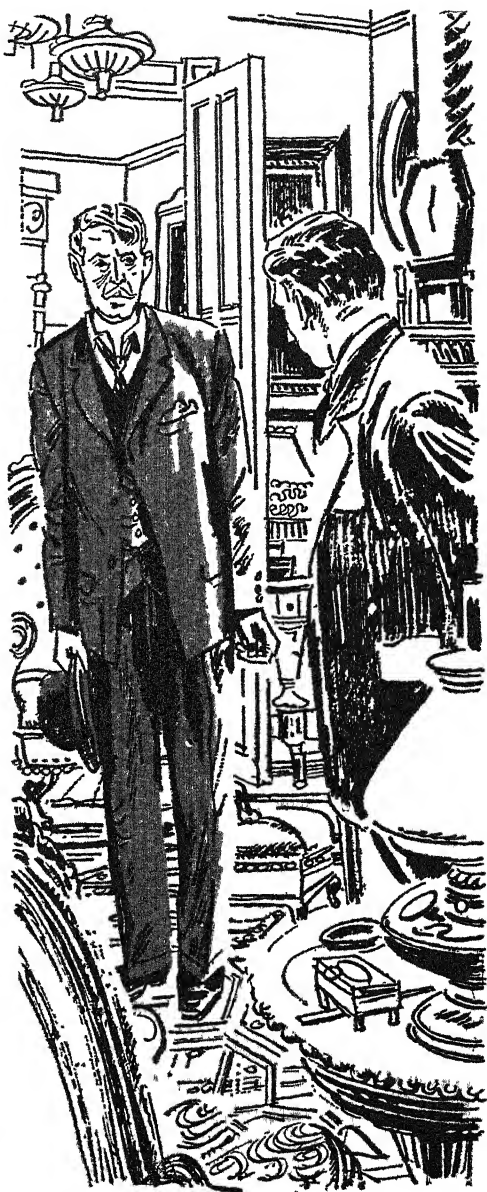
not dwell upon the insidious manner in which our liaison developed. I accept full blame for my weakness and sinfulness. Nevertheless, I can affirm that in my downfall I received every assistance from Mona.

"She exacted everything from me—clothes, jewellery, money, a flat—and when I offered to make full provision for her and the child she was expecting, she refused, in the most offensive terms. Marriage alone would satisfy her.

"At that precise moment my father died. Driven frantic by grief and worry, I experienced a sharp recurrence of my epileptic seizures. After one particularly violent fit I went by arrangement to interview Mona. Ah, my dear young man, you cannot realize how painful and dangerous is the post-epileptic state. The mind remains in a deep narcosis, but the passions are still violent and excited. It was in this condition that I did the murder."

The wild disorder of Oswald's features altered to a pallid smile—a look so secret, so expressive of a warped and twisted mind that Paul gripped the sides of his chair.

"My immediate impulse was to give myself up. Then, for the first time, the Inner voice spoke



to me. One word. 'Refrain.' It was not that I feared the consequences of my crime, but simply that I perceived stretching before me what I might do, in reparation and atonement." Oswald's manner suddenly grew lofty. "Thereupon I dedicated my life to the service of mankind."

"But what . . ." Paul interposed, "what about the man who was condemned?"

"Ah!" breathed Oswald in a tone of profound regret. "That was the one flaw in my scheme of reclamation. But it was so ordained. I will not deny that, several times, I was tempted to surrender myself. But the Voice spoke again, and again, more imperiously. What could I do? We are all the instruments of a Higher Power. Suffering is our lot. The end justifies the means." Again that bleak and twisted smile spread, slyly, over Oswald's face. "The Inner Voice even suggested steps, precautions to ensure my safety, so that my great work might go forward. There were those, as you know, who sought to profit by a vague suspicion of my guilt. Although I imposed my will upon them, took them into my house, moulded them as the potter does the clay, they remained a source of anxiety. Do not imagine that my life was one of ease. In prostrating seizures, twice and even three times a week, I endured my nervous malady. And most difficult of all was the constant guard I was obliged to keep upon myself, holding my inspired actions within the limits of convention so that all those outside prying eyes might not read my secret."

Oswald got up again and began to tread the floor with hunched shoulders and pale swinging hands. A shiver went through Paul as he watched the man's dark and tortured misery.

Suddenly, from the mist outside, came the faint note of a boat's fog-horn. This unearthly sound, like the plaint of a tormented spirit, seemed to pierce Oswald to the heart. He drew up stiffly, and with staring eyes and head stretched back, he exclaimed: "The hour approaches. Sanctify Thy servant."

Steadying himself against the edge of the table, Oswald drew a handkerchief from his pocket and wiped his forehead. Then, wanly, he smiled at Paul. "My dear young man, again I thank you for your kind attention. I shall be all right now, if you wish to leave me."

Paul hesitated, a strange glow of pity within his breast.

"You promise to go away?"

"I shall go away." Oswald smiled again. "This has not been unforeseen. I have resources at my command. Good-bye—and God bless you."

He opened the door for Paul to depart.

CHAPTER 18

NEXT MORNING, when the court opened, the atmosphere was electric. When it was seen that Sir Matthew was not in his place, curious rumours flew, barely stifled when he hastened to his seat, late, with a haggard, unslept look.

When their lordships were seated on the bench, Nigel Grahame stood up. "My lords," he announced, "with your permission I wish to resume my examination of the witness Louisa Burt."

A brief pause ensued while Burt took her place upon the stand.

"I trust," Grahame began, "that you have had the opportunity to compose yourself overnight."

"I'm all right." Burt spoke without her ingratiating coyness, almost rudely. Her hesitation of the previous day was gone as though she had been admonished and fortified. She stood up in the box and boldly returned Grahame's gaze.

"We were speaking," said Grahame, "of your acquaintance with Edward Collins. You saw a good deal of him before and during the trial?"

"How could I help it? We was together most of the time."

"Then you talked over the case with him frequently?"

"No," Burt said quickly. "We never mentioned it once."

Grahame raised his brows slightly and glanced towards Mr. Justice Frame before remarking:

"That is a most surprising statement. However, we shall let it pass. Did you discuss the case with Collins *after* the trial?"

"No," Burt answered flatly.

"I must warn you," Grahame said steadily, "that you are upon oath and that the penalties for perjury are exceedingly severe."

"My lords, I protest against that insinuation." The Attorney-General half rose. "It is calculated to intimidate the witness."

"Did you and Collins *never* talk about the case?" Grahame insisted.

"Well," for the first time Burt dropped her eyes, "I don't properly remember. I suppose we might have."

"In other words, you did?"

"Yes."

Grahame drew a long breath.

"On the night of the murder, when the man rushed past Edward Collins on the landing, he did not, even faintly, recognize him?"

"No," Burt answered loudly.

"And you? He was a total stranger to you?"

"Yes."

"You never told Collins that you felt you had seen the man before?"

"Never."

"You did not suggest a name to him?"

"No."

There was a fateful pause.

"To return to your own observation on that momentous evening . . . even if the street lamp was not lit . . . even if you could not clearly discern the features of the fugitive, at least you saw that he was running?"

"Yes. I've said so till I'm tired."

"Forgive me if I fatigue you unduly. Did the man run all the way to the end of the street?"

"Yes."

"He did not by any chance mount a bicycle, a bright green bicycle, that lay against the railings, and pedal out of sight?"

"No."

Grahame looked gravely at the witness. "In the light of certain information now in our possession I must again caution you to be careful. I repeat—did he not dash off on a green bicycle?"

Burt was shaken. She muttered, "I've told you 'No.' I can't do no more." She began to snivel into her handkerchief.

Once more the Attorney-General protested.

"My lords, I strenuously object to the means being employed to intimidate this witness."

A flush rose to Grahame's cheek. He answered spiritedly:

"Perhaps the Attorney-General feels that I am usurping his prerogative. There have been days, in this very court, when I have heard Counsel for the Crown using witnesses as a terrier might use a rat, reducing them

to such a state of agitation that they did not know what they were saying. If only for that reason I am endeavouring to afford this witness the utmost consideration."

Dead silence followed these words. Sir Matthew Sprott glanced towards the bench, but Mr. Justice Frame did not intervene.

Grahame waited until Burt had dried her eyes.

"When the trial was over you came with Edward Collins to the Central Police Station to receive your reward."

"Yes, we did, and you can't make no harm out of that."

"Of course not. I must ask you to turn your thoughts back to a conversation you had with Collins in the police waiting-room."

"What conversation?"

"Perhaps I can refresh your memory." Grahame picked up a slip of paper. "I suggest that the exchanges between Collins and yourself went in part like this:

COLLINS: Well, it's about over now, and I'm not sorry, it's really got me down.

BURT: Don't worry, Ed. You know we acted right and proper.

COLLINS: Yes, I daresay. All the same . . .

BURT: All the same what?

COLLINS: Oh, you know, Louisa. Why didn't you tell about . . . you know what?

BURT: Because they never asked me, stupid.

COLLINS: I suppose not. Will we . . . will we get the reward?

BURT: We'll get it, Ed, don't worry. We might even do better.

COLLINS: What do you mean?

BURT: You just wait and see. I've got something up my sleeve.

COLLINS: Mathry was the man, wasn't he, Louisa?"

BURT: Shut up, will you? It's too late to back down now. We didn't do no harm. With all that evidence they would have done for Mathry anyhow. And after all, he didn't get hung. Don't you understand, you fool, it don't pay to go against the police. Besides, things may come out of this better than you ever dreamed. I'll live like a lady yet before I'm through."

When Grahame finished reading he turned sternly towards the witness. "Do you deny that this conversation, which was overheard and transcribed, actually took place?"

"I don't know. I can't remember. I'm not responsible for what Ed Collins said." Burt gave her answer in a flustered voice.

"When you had received the reward what did you do?"

"I forget exactly."

"Did you not go off on a holiday to Margate with Collins?"

"I believe I did."

"Did you and he occupy the same room at the Beach Hotel?"

"Certainly not. And I didn't come here to be insulted."

"Then perhaps you would rather I did not show the court the hotel register of that date."

"My lords," again the Attorney-General interposed, "I must protest these irrelevant allegations against the moral character of the witness."

Grahame said, "Yet when more damaging and less true allegations were made fifteen years ago against my client's morals the Crown raised no objection."

There was a silence. Grahame turned to Burt.

"When this holiday was over you returned to Wortley. You discovered that the atmosphere had changed. You were scarcely the popular heroine you had imagined you might be. Work was difficult to find. And it was precisely at this juncture that both Edward Collins and yourself were offered excellent situations in a private house. Is that correct?"

"Yes."

"Who was the owner of that house?"

Burt's defiance was gone. There was a hush as she brought out the name: "Mr. Enoch Oswald."

"Am I correct in asserting that Mr. Oswald behaved with remarkable kindness towards Collins, married him to his head parlour-maid, then shipped him off to New Zealand?"

"I think he treated Ed handsome," Burt mumbled.

"And you?" queried Grahame suavely. "Were you not treated by him with equal consideration?"

Burt muttered a crushed assent. Every eye was fixed on Grahame as he put his next question.

"Can you account for the remarkable interest shown by Mr. Oswald in you and Collins, the two key witnesses of the Mathry case?"

Burt shook her head dumbly.

"Could it be, in any way connected with the fact . . ." Grahame

queried temperately, "that Enoch Oswald was the landlord of the flat occupied by Mona Spurling?"

There was a mortal stillness in the court.

"Mr. Oswald was fairly regular in his calls at the flat, to collect his monthly rent, to see to the comfort of his tenant. Since he came of an evening, he might well have been noticed, vaguely, by Collins, who was frequently in the street at that hour."

"I . . . I suppose so."

Then, like a knife thrust: "Did Oswald use a bicycle to make these visits?"

"What if he did . . . and a green bike at that!" Burt moaned. "It had nothing to do with me."

"One last question," Grahame said casually, as a kind of afterthought. "We have heard considerable mention, yesterday and today, of a left-handed man. Is Mr. Oswald left-handed?"

Burt was at the end of her resources. She let out a gasp.

"Yes, he is," she screamed. "And I don't care who knows it."

After that she went into hysterics. The court seethed with excitement. Reporters hurried towards the telephones.

When Burt had been assisted from the stand, Grahame turned towards the bench to deliver his final address.

"My lords," he began, "we pride ourselves upon the principle that any man is presumed innocent until he is found guilty. A person may be suspected, but the burden of proof rests upon the Crown.

"Now, the Crown, my lords, has great resources at its command—brains, money and authority. Its agents, being human, are anxious—not only to justify their legitimate suspicions—but to advance themselves, to stand well in the public eye. The experts whom it engages, men of the highest quality, may nevertheless be influenced by this prevailing mood. Once an unhappy wretch has become suspect, a biased attitude of mind develops, almost instinctively, an attitude hostile and prejudicial to the accused man.

"Consider the case of this ordinary citizen before us, not a strong character, but on the whole neither better nor worse than his fellows. Unhappy at home, he understandably lets his eye wander. He is introduced by a friend to an attractive young woman, he flirts with her a little, and, after some weeks, sends her a postcard asking her to dinner.

Then, to his horror, only a few days later, he discovers that the woman has been brutally murdered, and that the police are seeking high and low for the sender of the postcard.

"What on earth is he to do? He knows he ought to come forward and make a voluntary admission to the police. But the threat of involving himself holds him back. Besides, there is one question they are sure to ask him. Where was he between eight and nine on the evening of September 8th. Casting back anxiously he remembers he had gone to the cinema, alone, and had, in fact, fallen asleep during the performance. What a useless alibi! Who could have seen him, sitting in the dark?

"Badly frightened, he loses his head and, instead of going to the authorities, he cooks up an alibi with his friend. Presently he is discovered as the writer of the postcard. He offers his alibi and it is proved to be false. From that instant he is ensnared. A structure of damning evidence, his trip so like an escape, his resistance of arrest, rises against him. But certain discrepancies also come to light—a peculiar money-bag found beside the body, a green bicycle that might well have been used by the murderer, neither of which can in any way be identified with the prisoner. Yet these discrepancies are ignored by the prosecution. They do not fit, therefore they are discarded. And in court they are not even mentioned.

"My lords, it is my contention that the Crown's conduct of the case against Rees Mathry was calculated to prevent, and did prevent, a fair trial. There were serious omissions of evidence. Moreover, the Prosecutor's speech to the jury was directed not to their minds but to their feelings, inducing in them not logic but violent emotions of horror, anger, repulsion and revenge. In my opinion the speech delivered by the Crown against Rees Mathry strikes at the very root of our criminal administration."

As Grahame paused, Paul threw a quick glance towards Sprott. The Prosecutor's ruddy face had turned as pale as death.

"It is, moreover, my submission," Grahame resumed, "that in his charge to the jury the presiding judge at the trial was both inaccurate and misleading. He lectured on the character of the prisoner to his extreme prejudice and failed to direct the attention of the jury to the grave irregularities I have instanced."

Grahame suddenly extended his right hand towards the bench.

"My lords, it is clear that Mathry is innocent, the victim of a ghastly travesty of justice. The witness Burt has indicated only too plainly the real perpetrator of the crime. My lords, I entreat you to redress an awful wrong, to admit the culpability of the Crown, and to proclaim to the world the innocence of Rees Mathry."

There were tears in Paul's eyes as Grahame sat down amid a storm of cheering. When order was restored, the Attorney-General, having completed a long consultation with his colleagues, got reluctantly to his feet to put the case for the Crown. When he sat down Mr. Justice Frame immediately adjourned the court.

It was two-thirty before their lordships returned to the court. Mr. Justice Frame, dignified and impenetrable, delivered the verdict:

"This court is satisfied that the verdict of guilty cannot be justified and the Home Secretary is immediately recommending to His Majesty the grant of a free pardon."

Pandemonium . . . hats in the air . . . wild and unrestrained cheering. People crowding round to pat Paul on the back: Dunn and McEvoy, Nigel Grahame—why, here was old Prusty, wheezily embracing him. Over there, Dale, more than ever stony-faced, Sprott pressing towards the exit, dazed by the blow. Ella Fleming and his mother, bewildered, still ashamed. The pastor, his eyes closed as if in prayer.

Paul moved to where was seated that broken man whom they would no longer call a murderer.

CHAPTER 19

THEY had won. Nothing could flatten out the triumph of this final victory. Yet Paul's nerves were still overcharged. He was faced with a future that remained undetermined and precarious.

He got back to the Windsor at four o'clock. As he came along the corridor, he saw Ella's luggage standing strapped and labelled. When he entered the sitting-room he found her seated there, wearing her hat and gloves, and that determined air which in the past presaged a fixed course of action for them both. The sight of her crystallized his uncertainty. He took a drink of water from the sideboard carafe, feeling her eyes upon him.

"Well, it's all over now," he said.

"I should hope so." Sitting very erect, she gave her head a sharp toss.

"I know it hasn't been pleasant, Ella," he said reasonably. "But we had to go through with it."

"Oh, we had, had we? That's what you think. But I don't. I think it's all been completely useless. What have you got out of it? Absolutely nothing."

He flushed. "All I wanted was to vindicate my father."

"That did a fat lot of good. The way he's been carrying on, you'd have been better off if you'd left him where he was. He's just a drunken, disgusting old man."

"Ella! The prison did it . . . he wasn't always like that."

"Well, he's like that now. And I've more than had enough of it. I was never so humiliated in my life, to think that nice people would know that I was remotely connected with such a person."

A silence fell which she interpreted as an indication of his submission. Mollified, she spoke in a milder tone.

"Come along, then. Get your things packed."

"What for?"

"Because we're leaving, silly. There's a seven o'clock boat from Holyhead."

"I can't leave him, Ella."

She looked at him, amazed, and then aghast. "I never heard such nonsense in my life. He doesn't want you. The minute he came out of the court he slunk off to some low pub. Well, let him stick there."

He shook his head. "I'm not coming."

The blood mounted to her forehead. Her eyes flashed.

"If you don't, Paul, I warn you, you'll be sorry. I've put up with a good deal for your sake. But I can go so far, and no farther . . ."

While she continued to upbraid him the door opened. Mr. Fleming and Paul's mother came into the room. Both were dressed for the journey. The minister glanced from Paul to his daughter.

"What is the matter?" he asked.

"Everything!" Ella cried. "After all we've done for him, Paul has the nerve to pretend he isn't coming back with us."

A troubled expression came into Fleming's eyes. During these last weeks he had suffered a constant warring within himself. He had hoped to regenerate Mathry and he had failed; the defeat pressed on the roots

of his belief. He temporized in well-worn phrases he had almost come to despise: "Don't you think you have done enough, my boy? You have worked so . . . so nobly."

"Oh, yes, Paul." His mother pleaded in a subdued voice. "You must come with us."

Breaking into angry tears, Ella said: "So far as I'm concerned, it is the end, anyway. He cares more for that old man than he does for me. I'll never speak to him again."

Fleming made an effort to pacify his daughter, but Ella was too far gone to heed his words. And Paul's mother was now too cast down to help him. She desired nothing but immediate escape.

At last the minister gave up. He salved his conscience and saved his dignity in part by giving Paul a long and silent handclasp. A few minutes later they were gone.

Paul could scarcely believe it. Alone in the room, he sank into a chair in weary relief. A load seemed to be lifted from his mind. He knew that he would never see Ella again. He felt free.

As he sat there the door opened, and, slowly, Mathry came in. He was quite sober; but seemed tired. He advanced sluggishly to a chair, sat down, and darted a glance at Paul from beneath his ragged brows. When Paul said nothing, he asked heavily: "Have they cleared out?"

"Yes."

"Good riddance." Then he added: "What keeps you hanging around? I suppose you want some of my cash when I get it?"

"That's it," Paul agreed calmly. He had found this the best way of dealing with his father's sardonic thrusts. And indeed, the answer silenced Mathry. But, from time to time, he darted glances at his son, as though he hoped that Paul would speak to him. Almost in desperation, Mathry threw the question: "Had your supper?"

"I was just going to order something."

"Then order for me as well."

Paul asked room service to send up dinner for two. They sat down to it in silence. Mathry ate with less than his usual appetite, and after a while his efforts seemed to flag. Without finishing his dessert, he stood up and went over to the arm-chair where he slowly filled and lit the pipe which he had recently adopted. His lumpy figure sagged. He looked a spent old man.

"I'm sick of that gang I've been running around with." He spoke with sudden bitterness. "All they're doing is making a mug of me. They keep telling me what a great man I am, then they order the drinks and let me pay for them. Dirty lot of spongers."

Suddenly, to Paul's concern and distress, Mathry's chest gave a great heave. His stiff face began, under its mask, to work pitifully.

"Everything goes wrong for me. Every blasted thing. Even the retrial. Why wouldn't they let me speak? They were only laughing up their sleeves at me. I'm a freak . . . don't fit in anywhere. I'll never be any good. I'm finished and done for."

His pipe had gone out, his face was grey, his whole body shook with anguish. Paul felt his heart melt. This weakness in his father, this unexpected gleam of hope was too precious to be wasted.

"You're certainly not done for." He waited for this to sink in. "What you've had to go through has changed you a lot. But as far as years go, you're not an old man. It's up to you to readjust your ideas and go in for what really suits you."

"Nothing suits me," Mathry muttered. "I've a good mind to finish myself. Coming by the canal tonight, I near threw myself in."

"That would be an excellent way to repay me."

Mathry raised his head and stole a look at his son. "Yes," he muttered. "You've been good to me, you have."

"Drown yourself, if you want to," Paul continued in a cutting tone. "Get out of your troubles the easy way. But it seems to me there's a slightly more sensible idea. You'll be getting a lump sum for damages soon. Why don't you buy yourself a little farm in the country . . . get out in the fresh air, have your own place . . . forget about hating people. You'll get your health back in the country . . . feel younger in mind and body."

"I couldn't do it," Mathry said in a husky voice.

"Yes, you could," Paul exclaimed. "And I'll help you. I'll try and finish my schooling near you. Be on hand if you need me."

"Would you?"

"Yes."

Mathry again stole that shrinking look at Paul. His chapped lips trembled. "I'm all in," he muttered. "I think I'll go to bed."

Paul felt his heart lift, as at a great victory. What had caused Mathry

to break down in this fashion he could not guess—he had not dared to hope for it. But in this crumbling front he saw a future for both of them, a final justification snatched in the moment of defeat. He looked straight at his father, keeping his voice under control. “You’ll feel better after a good sleep.”

Mathry got to his feet. “In the country . . .” he muttered. “With chickens and a *sow* . . . it would be fine . . . but could I . . . ?”

“Yes,” Paul said again, more firmly.

There was a moment’s hesitation.

“All right,” Mathry said in a queer hoarse tone. He opened his mouth, closed it again. “Now I’ll go and turn in.” Suddenly he paused, as though struck by something, lifted his head and looked into the distance. His voice took on a different quality—remote, and strangely timorous.

“Do you remember . . . Paul . . . on Jesmond Dene . . . when we used to sail the paper boats?” He gave his son a shamed, contorted look and, brushing his hand across his eyes, shambled out of the room.

FOR A long time Paul remained in the sitting-room. Now, after all, he could carry out his plan. He would complete his teacher’s course at one of the smaller English provincial universities, and find some sort of dwelling, no matter how primitive, to house them both, with a garden in which Mathry might find the incentive to work out his own salvation.

Paul got to his feet. He wished nothing to disturb the new sense of peace which had replaced his rage against the law. It was not late, and before retiring he decided to take a walk. Switching out the light, he went downstairs.

The evenings were lengthening and, outside, the last of the daylight lingered, as though reluctant to depart. Stirred by the beauty of the twilight he strolled away from the hotel. He had meant to walk at random, but half an hour later, he found himself in Ware Place. Outside Lena’s lodging he drew up, and from the opposite side of the street, resting against the iron railings, he gazed upward at the unlit windows.

The days of stifling uncertainty were over, and his nerves were no longer on the rack. He was at last free to appreciate all that Lena had done for him. Now he realized that without her help his father would still be in Stoneheath and he, almost certainly, would not have survived. A pang of regret for his insensitiveness, his lack of gratitude, his puerile

attitude towards her tragedy, stung him. He had a sudden longing that was almost unbearable to see her again. If only she might appear, at this instant, from the shadows, bare-headed as usual, wearing her old rain coat, so generous and humble, so heedless of herself, with a freshness like the dew.

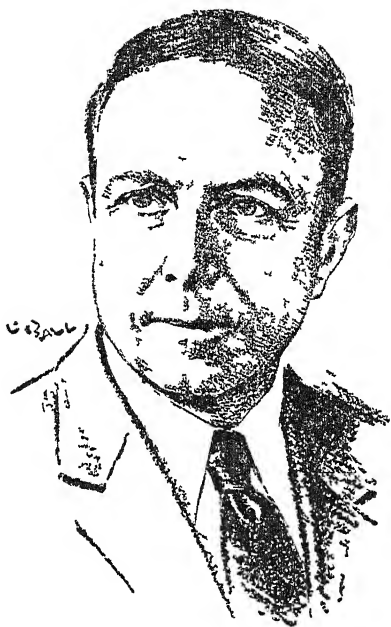
From the Ware steeple came eleven slow strokes, and still he remained looking upward at those three blank windows. He would go to Dunn, tomorrow, and obtain Lena's address. He foresaw the circumstances which would enable him to find her and, as though that moment had already come, he was filled with happiness.

At last he turned slowly away. In the main thoroughfare a few news boys were calling the final editions. His eye was caught by a placard beneath a street lamp. Arrested, he took a few steps backward, handed over a coin, and held the copy of the *Chronicle* to the flickering light. The police had broken into the flat at Ushaw Terrace and found Enoch Oswald. He had hanged himself from the gas fixture.

Paul slowly recovered himself. "Poor devil," he muttered at last.

All bitterness, the last shreds of hatred, seemed purged from him. He drew a long deep breath. The night air was damp and cool. From a nearby basement bake house, where the men were already at work, came the fragrance of new bread. There was no moon but through the rooftops a few clear stars looked down upon the city as it settled at last to silence. Insensibly, Paul's heart lifted. His step quickened as he set out for the hotel. For the first time for many months he felt the sweet savour of life, and the promise of the morning.





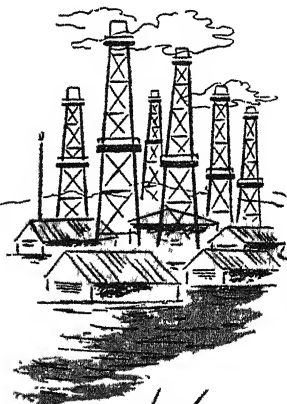
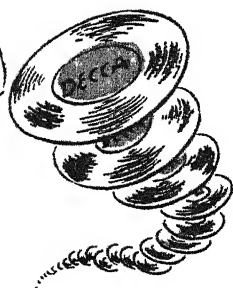
A J Cronin

A J CRONIN was born in Cardross in Scotland, studied medicine at the University of Glasgow and served, during the First World War, as a Surgeon Sub Lieutenant in the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve. After the war he practised medicine for four years in South Wales—the scene of *The Stars Look Down* and *The Citadel*. He had later settled down to a substantial practice in the West End of London when fate, and an irrepressible talent for writing, took a hand in his career.

His first novel, *Hatter's Castle*, published in 1931, was an instant success, and this has been followed by a long line of best sellers—all of them still being reprinted throughout the world—including *The Keys of the Kingdom*, *The Green Years* and *Crusader's Tomb* (which has already appeared in Condensed Books). His autobiography, *Adventures in Two Worlds*, describing his childhood and life as a doctor, has also been a Condensed Books choice.

Married to another ex doctor, and the father of three sons, Dr Cronin now lives in Lucerne, Switzerland, but he still likes to set his stories in the industrial England he knows so well.

CALL ME LUCKY



Illustrations by *ajalor*

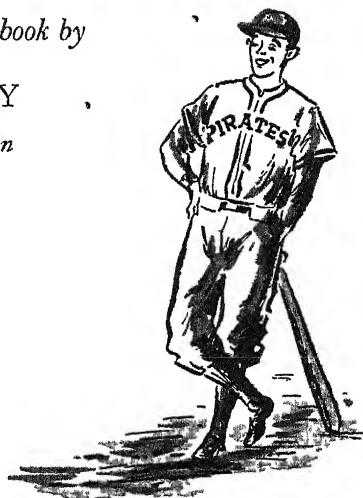
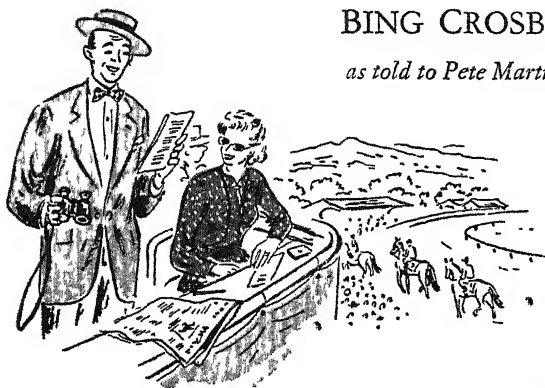


CALL ME LUCKY

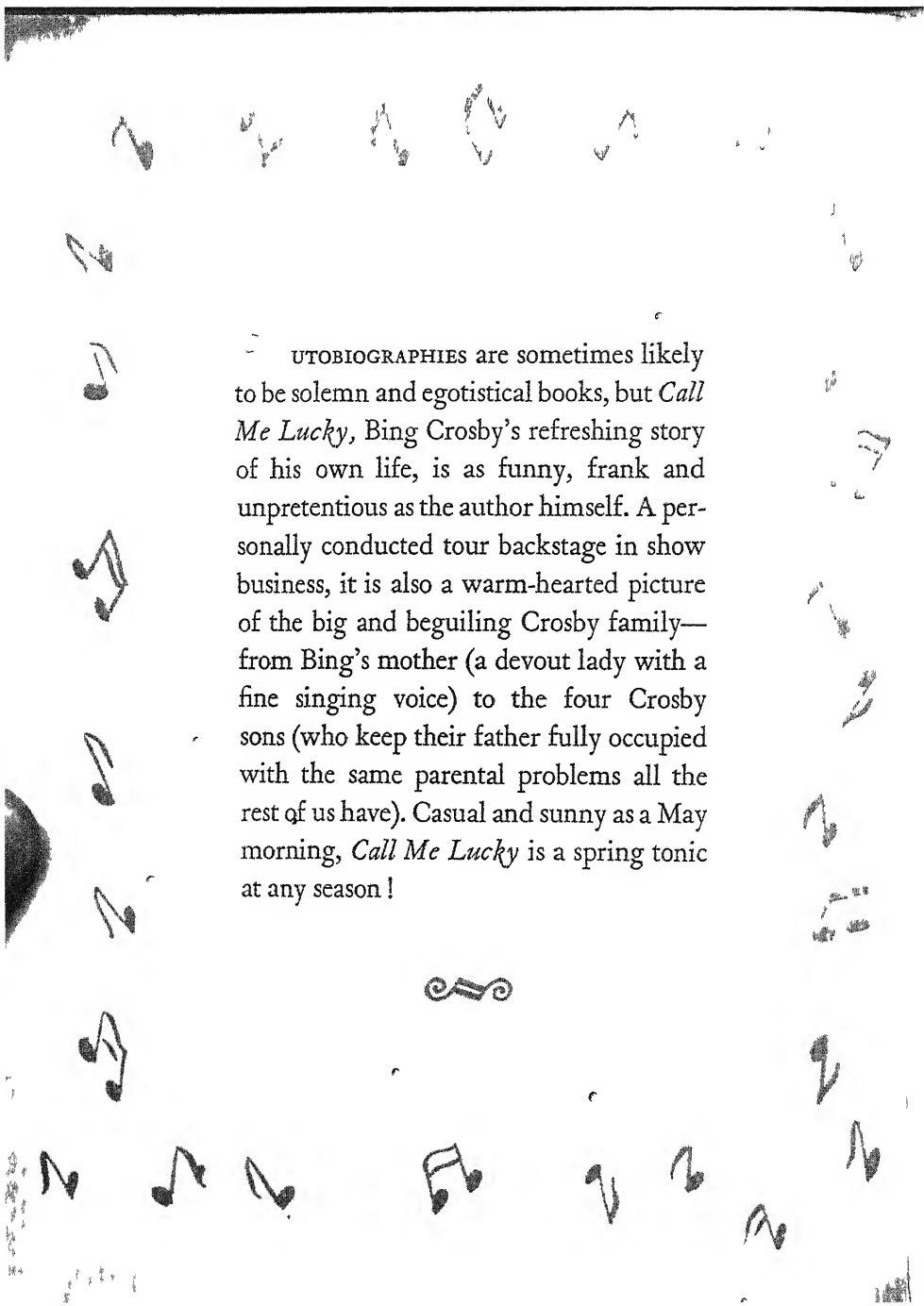
A condensation of the book by

BING CROSBY

as told to Pete Martin



"Call Me Lucky" is published by Frederick Muller, London

The page is decorated with various musical notes and symbols. At the top, there are several eighth and sixteenth notes. Along the left margin, there are larger notes, including a quarter note and a beamed eighth-note pair. The right margin features a series of eighth notes. At the bottom, there are more eighth and sixteenth notes, along with a double bar line with a repeat sign in the center.

UTOBIOGRAPHIES are sometimes likely to be solemn and egotistical books, but *Call Me Lucky*, Bing Crosby's refreshing story of his own life, is as funny, frank and unpretentious as the author himself. A personally conducted tour backstage in show business, it is also a warm-hearted picture of the big and beguiling Crosby family—from Bing's mother (a devout lady with a fine singing voice) to the four Crosby sons (who keep their father fully occupied with the same parental problems all the rest of us have). Casual and sunny as a May morning, *Call Me Lucky* is a spring tonic at any season!

CHAPTER 1

I've had a lot of advice from a lot of different people about how to go about telling this tale. I've been told, "You want to keep in mind that the way the world is today, yours is a story that could happen only in America."

There may be some truth in that notion. I couldn't sing my songs in Russia. They have no ideological significance. If I started to boo-boo-boo, I'd have to clear each boo with the Kremlin.

I've also been told, "Take a boy like yourself who started from humble beginnings and has achieved success—why, it's nothing short of inspirational."

This idea sounds strictly out of the corn popper to me. In this country we like to tell our youngsters that the way to succeed is by hard work and self-sacrifice. But if you read my story, it'll be obvious to you—it's obvious to me—that I haven't worked very hard. The things I've done are the things I've wanted to do. Singing or movie acting has never been drudgery for me. So I don't know that my story contains an inspirational point of view. However, it is certainly shot full of another American commodity—luck.

When my mother hears me say that luck has had a powerful influence on my life, she pooh-poohs such talk. She attributes any success I've had to the efficacy of prayer. She says, "Your luck has been my prayers and the prayers I've asked the Poor Clare nuns to offer up for you." I'm not scoffing at this theory. I think prayer is a potent thing to have working on your side. Some of my friends have noted the fact that when I pass a church, I'm apt to say, "I guess I'll go in and bow a pious knee." It seems a good idea for me to say a prayer and meditate for a little while upon what an oaf I've been—as who hasn't?

But, however I look at it, starting the story of my life makes my memory feel like an out-of-kilter juke-box. When I drop a nickel into it, I'm not sure which story it will play back.

I MIGHT have the story of my grandmother, Katie, come out. Katie married an Irishman named Dennis Harrigan. When she was on her death-bed, Dennis sat nearby watching her for some sign of recognition.

Just before the end, her eyes opened and she said, "Give me your hand, Dinnis."

He put his hand in hers and said, "Katie, it's a hand that was never raised against ye."

Her eyes opened wider. "And it's a domn good thing for ye it wasn't!" she said. Then she died.

I MIGHT shove in another nickel and my memory juke-box would play the story of the oddly assorted crowd which attended a New Year's Eve party given by Win Rockefeller at the estate in Pocantico Hills, New York, which had once belonged to his grandfather, John D.

"You bring your gang from show business," Win had said, "and I'll bring my friends. We'll have a band and we'll hire some entertainers. It should be fun."

"Hmm," I said doubtfully. "But your gang has probably never been exposed to my kind of a gang."

"I don't care," he said. "Bring anybody you want to. I'll have a chartered bus in front of the Sherry-Netherland about four or five New Year's Eve afternoon. We'll be in Pocantico Hills in time for a swim in the indoor pool, have dinner and a big New Year's Eve dance, spend the next day and come home in the evening."

I talked some of my pals in show business into going. Among them were such blue-blood types as Phil Silvers, Barney Dean, an ex-vaudeville knock-about comedian, and Rags Ragland, an honours graduate from burlesque. I held a meeting with my group before the take-off and begged them not to start any fights or make flippant observations about our host or his friends. They promised solemnly that they wouldn't, and they did pretty well in the bus. After reaching Tarrytown we drove through a vast stone gateway and a succession of parks, then more gates and more parks and more gates, with watchmen at each gate. Finally we pulled up before a tremendous pile of brick and masonry, and I heard a whispered question from one of my pals, "Is this the rumpus room?" I silenced him with a glare. Then we got out of the bus and started up fifty or sixty stone steps to the main entrance.

CALL ME LUCKY

We were half-way up when Barney Dean said, "Wait."

"What's the matter?" Win Rockefeller asked.

"I can't go in," Barney replied.

I asked, "Why not?" I should have known better.

"I forgot my library card," Barney said.

I gave him a dirty look. I had a feeling my gang was getting out of control.

The head butler assigned us to rooms and told us that we could do anything we wanted; we could swim or play table tennis or indoor tennis on a regulation-size court. We opened one door and there before our pop-eyes were long, gleaming bowling alleys with pin boys waiting. We opened another door, and there was "the Park Avenue Hillbilly," Dorothy Shay, singing songs to entertain us. Behind another door a band was thumping and blaring.

We were watching a tennis game from the gallery above the indoor tennis court when one of Win's dowager friends popped her head in and asked, "Has anyone seen Millicent?"

We stared at each other blankly. Then Barney Dean said helpfully, "Maybe she's upstairs playing polo."

After that the atmosphere grew a little tense, but following a highball or two, the chill thawed and everyone became bosom friends. All in all, it was a memorable party.

A THIRD nickel in my memory juke-box might spring loose the story of making the movie *Going My Way* in 1944.

Leo McCarey, a top director and also an old golf-course friend of mine, was always threatening to use me in one of his pictures. "I'll get an idea for you, and when I do, I'll let you know," he said. It became a running gag. Every time I saw him, even if he was three or four fairways away, I'd holler, "Now?"

He'd give a slow, negative shake of his head and yell, "No."

That went on for years. Then one day I saw him at a football game, and when I asked, "Now?" he said, "Now!"

He came over to the house later and told me: "I want you to play a priest."

"Now what kind of a priest could I play?" I asked. "I'd be unbelievable, and, besides, the Church won't like that kind of casting."

"I think it would," he said. "I've talked to some pretty wise priests and they think you can handle the character I described."

I said, "Let's hear it."

So he gave me the story—and it was terrific. It wasn't the story he eventually used, but when he had finished, there wasn't a dry eye in the house—his or mine. In his preliminary take-out of his idea, I played a priest all right, but from there on it wasn't much like the final *Going My Way*. Looking back, I don't think he had a story at all. He just made one up as he went along.

Leo had his own movie-making system. He began with a few scenes to establish the locale and to give an idea what kind of priests Barry Fitzgerald, Frank McHugh and I were. After that, we never knew what we'd be doing from morning to afternoon. We'd come on the set about nine, have coffee and doughnuts, and Leo would go over to a piano and play for a while, while the rest of us sang a little. Then he'd wander round and think. About eleven o'clock, he'd say, "Well, let's get going."

We'd run through the scene he'd described to us the previous night. Then he'd say, "We're not going to do that. Take a two-hour lunch break. I'll whip something up and we'll shoot it after lunch." When we came back, what he'd whipped up might change the whole direction of the story. We shot it anyhow.

Leo is no Fancy Dan, Mittel-European technician who tosses close-ups, medium shots, montages, angle shots and camera tricks around. Most of his shots are old-fashioned no-nonsense, full-figure shots. One of the scenes in the picture was a chequer game which involved Fitzgerald, Frank McHugh and me. We ad-libbed it right on the set under Leo's direction. He shot it from just one angle, and then he said, "Print it."

"What, no close-ups?" we asked.

"It looked good to me from that angle," he said, and that was that.

The picture won a flock of Academy Awards. Leo was given the director's award and the award for writing the screen play. Barry Fitzgerald won the supporting Oscar. I got lucky and wound up with the award for the best male movie actor of 1944.

BUT if I'm to get on with my story, I'll have to rid myself of the feeling that my memories are a busted juke-box and get them organized so that they'll begin somewhere and end somewhere.

Although my mother takes a poor view of luck, the luckiest thing that ever happened to me was being born to the mother and father I was born to. My dad was relaxed and casual and believed in having a good time. In his youth, he had sung in amateur Gilbert and Sullivan productions. My mother, too, had a sweet, clear voice. Their shared love of singing helped bring them together.

Dad was quite a lad when it came to plinking the mandolin. It was the big instrument of his day. You weren't a gay blade unless you could accompany yourself with it when you sang. Dad played a little guitar, too—an accompanying guitar, just a four-string instrument, not a solo guitar.

Mother was the business manager of our family, the stretcher-outer of Dad's modest salary. She was also our family disciplinarian. The small Crosbys got a healthy amount of corporal punishment dealt out with a hairbrush or a strap. But Dad let Mother do it. He could never get angry enough. When a licking was coming up, he ducked out of the house and didn't come back until he was sure it was over. My mother loved us as much as any mother loves her children, but that love included doing the things that were good for our souls, even if doing them hurt her.

While I was in grade school, I had a certain amount of trouble with the truant officers. During one hooky session, my pals and I became involved in a mix-up with Jesmer's Bakery. We waited until Jesmer's delivery wagon came back from taking pastries round to different stores and brought back what wasn't sold. When the driver went inside to hand in his slips, he left his wagon unprotected. This was an invitation



to hollow-legged urchins, and we ran away with a couple of pies apiece, as well as bags of cinnamon buns. We ate all we could hold, but cinnamon buns are filling, so we had a number of them left.

We were down on Mission Boulevard, pegging buns at motorists, when one of the cars we pelted proved to be full of policemen going home from work. Its occupants tossed us into the juvenile-detention ward and called our mothers.

"Keep him there overnight," my mother said. "It'll do him good." She didn't relent. I cooled my heels in that pen all night.

My father's family stemmed from a rock-ribbed, tough-minded Plymouth elder, Edmund Brewster, who settled in Massachusetts in the 1600's. His descendants lived in New England for several generations. Most of them took to the sea, including my father's grandfather, Captain Nathaniel Crosby, who captained a ship for John Astor. More than once he sailed round the Horn to California, Oregon, Washington and China. Finally, leaving Astor, he bought his own ship.

Because of his many trips to China, Nathaniel had Chinese servants, as did his son—my father's father. Having been brought up by Chinese servants, my father spoke fluent Chinese and could even sing a few Chinese songs.

My mother's parents, Dennis and Katherine Harrigan, came from Ireland. They settled in Tacoma, where my Grandfather Harrigan became a building contractor.

He brought up a large family, of whom Mother's brother, George Harrigan, was my boyhood idol. Uncle George was a very talented entertainer and took part in theatricals around Seattle and Tacoma. He had a powerful Irish tenor voice that could shatter the crockery when he took dead aim at a high note.

He was a genius when it came to telling dialect stories. At Irish stories especially he was nothing short of magical. When he came to town the Crosby kids never left the house; we hung around and listened to Uncle George tell stories and sing songs.

Uncle George kept my father company, diverted him with his best stories and raised a comforting glass with him when I was born on May 2, 1904, in Tacoma.

I was named Harry after my father. My mother called me Harry. She still does. It was when I was seven or eight years old that I became Bing,

because of my fondness for a comic feature called the "Bingville Bugle." In it was a character named Bingo. The *o* was later deleted.

To me, my name seems simple and easy to pronounce. But there have been those who have as hard a time wrapping their tongues round it as if it were Cholmondeley. I remember an especially humbling experience when my wife, Dixie, and I were once going East by train. There was trouble on the line ahead and our train stopped until it was cleared up. Dixie and I got out and walked up and down the track behind the train. The rear guard, a little, hard-bitten, sunburnt Texan, was walking up and down, too, swinging his lantern.

He came up to us and said, "They tell me that rascal Bim Crosland's aboard."

"Who?" I asked.

"Bim Crosland," he repeated. "He's on the train. I'd certainly like to get a look at that lil ol' scoundrel. They tell me that he's quite a singer. I haven't heard him much. But as far as I'm concerned, Larry Ross could run him in a gopher hole."

Dixie and I agreed with him and thought no more of it. A few minutes later the driver gave a couple of toots. Everybody climbed back into the observation car.

In the morning there came a knock on our door. When we opened it there was our little guard friend. He eyed me with a twinkle in his eye and said, "You hoaxed me, didn't you?"

"How do you mean?" I asked.

"You're Bim Crosland yourself!" he said. "Just for that you've got to sign my book."

So I signed it, *Bim Crosland*.

In 1906 my family moved to Spokane, Washington, where my father had accepted a job as a book-keeper with the Inland Brewery.

My mother tells that we arrived on very short funds, rented a house and ran up a sizeable grocery bill as well as a large one for fuel and other household necessities. But when Mother plagued Dad about the bills he was never seriously concerned. He merely opened his newspaper, put his feet up, lit his pipe and said, "Don't bother, Kate. It'll work out all right." It always did.

We small Crosbys took our cue from Dad. Whether inherited or not,

his ability to relax has helped me in a life which has had its share of pressure. I don't worry seriously about anything. I do the best I can about a situation. If I can't improve it, I drop it.

Dad spent part of his first month's pay cheque from the brewery on a gramophone with a big horn. At first we had no piano, but Dad wanted us to have everything musical, and he finally went into hock to buy us one.

One of my schoolmates, who is now Dr. Joseph Lynch, a famous neuro-surgeon in the North-west, has told me since that everybody in Spokane knew when I was coming because they could hear me singing or whistling. I suppose that was because of having a dad who was always bringing a new tune into the house on sheet music or on a record—I had a constant succession of them in my head. And I had to whistle or sing to get them out.

I had to grow up a little, though, before I got over minding singing before an audience. One of my early memories is of a Christmas pageant in which I was dressed as a girl. I can't remember anything else about it except my hot shame at wearing such a costume. Having to sing in public embarrassed me until I'd almost finished at high school—especially the non-popular kind of songs which teachers usually forced upon kids.

But there never was a time when I didn't love athletics. In high school I played baseball, basketball, handball and football, and we had a good football team. But baseball was really my game. I was and am nutty about it. When I thought I wasn't appreciated at home, I used to say that I was going to run away to play baseball. But it was merely a youthful threat. I took it out in playing semi-professional baseball with the Spokane Ideal Laundry team.

While I was at Webster grade school in Spokane, my athletics were confined to a personal contest or two. One of my sisters, Mary Rose, was a little on the chubby side. However, I resented any reference to her roundness by anyone except members of my family. One of the kids in the eighth grade drew a picture on the blackboard of a big fat girl. Under it he wrote "Mary Rose." I told him I'd settle with him later.

After school I got my gang together and he got his gang together, and we met in an alley behind his house. Eighty or a hundred kids gathered to see the battle, and a few lorry drivers who came by formed them into a circle.

The other kid was strong, but he knew nothing about boxing. Since I knew how to box a little, I cut his eye and gave him a bloody nose. Every time he rushed me, I stuck out my left and he ran into it. Then I'd throw my right. I couldn't miss. My opponent was older and bigger, and if he'd known even the rudiments of self-defence, he could have killed me.

When I finally went home, my mother thought the blood on my grey-flannel shirt was mine. I had a hard time convincing her it was the other fellow's, but when some of the kids who'd seen the battle backed me up, she believed me.

It's one of my mother's favourite stories about me, I suppose because in her eyes it made me seem chivalrous and gallant—a small knight in grey-flannel armour protecting defenceless womanhood from abuse. I'm loath to have her tell it, because, as mothers do, she builds me up in it. But I'm not so loath as if I'd lost.

While still a small fry, I got into another row over a dame. This time the cause of the trouble was not one of my sisters, but a girl named Gladys Lemmon. I'd taken Gladys bob-sledding on Ligerwood Hill a few times. She was a real doll, with long, fluttery eyelashes. I'd hook my bob-sled rope on the steps of a coal wagon. The coal wagon would take us up the hill and we'd slide down while Gladys squealed with entrancing shrillness and clasped her arms round my middle.

It was all very idyllic until my brother Larry needled me about her at the dinner table one night. "Where've you been?" he asked. "Out squeezin' that Lemmon again?"

The family laughed uproariously and I saw red; I picked up a leg of lamb and let my tormentor have it, gravy and all. The laughter stopped and a scuffle began, but my mother quelled it. The lamb was retrieved, refurbished and repaired in the kitchen, and we attacked it instead of each other.

CHAPTER 2

IN 1917, I entered Gonzaga High School, which is run by Jesuit priests in preparation for Gonzaga College. When I went there it was a rugged school. Certainly it was not dressy. One pair of corduroy trousers lasted all the year.

My dad's wages as book-keeper at the Inland Brewery were not munificent, so it was necessary for us Crosby boys to work at odd jobs after school or in the mornings to help out. Mother and Dad told us, "We'll provide a place in which you can live and we'll feed you, but you'll have to earn your own money for your clothes and athletic equipment and recreation."

The jobs I held down were legion. I don't blame anyone who eyes me sceptically as I list them. My own kids give me a guffaw when I tell them what I've done. *That's Dad for you*, that guffaw seems to say, *romancing about his youth again*.

I did work at a lot of jobs. While I was at grade school and high school, I had a morning-paper round for the *Spokesman-Review*. This meant that I got up at four o'clock each morning and went out to the intersection of Nora and Addison Avenues. It was an area dotted with old trams discarded by the tramway company. We stripped them for firewood, built a big bonfire and awaited the first tram of the morning, the paper tram. When it came, we folded the papers into throwable shapes by the comfortable warmth of the blaze we'd started.

There were several ways of folding papers: the three-cornered, the dog-ear, and the boomerang. My favourite was the boomerang. It had a tight twist in the middle which made it hug a porch when it hit. But I'm afraid my best shots were on the roof, under the porch and in the bushes.

In the summer, I had jobs on a farm, in an apple orchard, in a logging camp. One summer I had a topography job with a party locating new logging roads and sluices—my cousin, Lloyd Crosby, was a big noise with the Weyerhaeuser Timber Company. I didn't last long there. I laid my right knee open with an axe, and when I got well, I cut the other knee. I remember my cousin's saying, "We'd better get this kid the hell out of here before he kills himself."

For quite a few years I worked after school at the Spokane Post Office, and one whole winter I gave up my paper round for a job as porter in a place called Everyman's Club, a club for loggers, miners and other working-men. I arrived there at five-thirty in the morning, after walking a mile and a half from our house, and went to work cleaning up the place. It was generally full of empty soup tins and snoose tins. Snoose is powdered tobacco put under the lower lip.

What with that job and the paper round and going to six-thirty Mass at Gonzaga, I formed the habit of getting up at the crack of dawn. I've never got over it.

My earliest theatrical experiences were in elocution contests. I remember reciting "Whisperin' Jim," and "The Dukite Snake," which was a grim story of an Australian family that carved a homestead out of the Australian bush. The father of the family killed a snake, and the snake's mate followed him home and did away with the entire family. It was a gruesome little number.

I recited many of Robert W. Service's things, such as "The Spell of the Yukon" and "The Shooting of Dan McGrew." I remember sinking my teeth into "Horatius at the Bridge" and "Spartacus to the Gladiators," classic pieces that seemed obligatory for all youthful elocutionists. I won a couple of awards with "Horatius" and "Spartacus." I took those eloquent lines in my teeth and shook them as a terrier shakes a bone.

Some of my friends think that all that elocution and debating is one of the reasons why people can understand me when I sing. It probably helped. And, of course, learning all those pieces by heart was good memory training. It may have something to do with the fact that I can learn a couple of pages of movie script after reading them over once on the set. It saves a lot of homework.

The education which seeped into my pores at Gonzaga—or maybe it was pounded through my skull—has paid off all through my life, sometimes in unexpected ways. In the film, *The Road to Morocco*, the plot called for Bob Hope and me to have trouble with a gendarme.

Hope asked me, "Can you talk French?"

"Certainly I can talk French," I said. Since the *Road* pictures are shot for the most part off the cuff or out of our heads, neither Hope's question nor my response were in the script. Nor was the long French spiel I ripped off. It was the tale of Monsieur Corbeau—French for Mr. Crow—and the piece of cheese. Many French students will remember this fable. Hope was tremendously impressed by my glibness. To this day he thinks I speak French fluently. He's visited France two or three times, but I don't think he knows how to say much more than *Oui, monsieur* or *Oui, mademoiselle*—especially the latter.

It seems to amuse my friends nowadays when they discover that I spent a lot of my time at Gonzaga in The Jug. But The Jug at Gonzaga wasn't a gaol. It was a room where students who weren't behaving or who had broken some rules were sent to do penance. We were given something from Ovid or Virgil or Cæsar's *Gallic Wars* to memorize or to write. If the offence were grievous, we had to memorize it backward. That was not easy. But easy or not, we memorized it, just the same.

We had some wonderful priests at Gonzaga—men like Father Kennelly, the prefect of discipline. He weighed in at two-eighty and we called him Big Jim. He stood in front of his office as we went by on our way to class. If we misbehaved, he brought his "discipliner" into play—a key chain ten or twelve feet long, with a bunch of keys on it. He kept this weapon coiled up under his cassock, and if we got out of line or were mischievous, he flicked out that chain and made contact on our anatomy where we'd feel it most. He delivered his shots with the accuracy and speed of a professional fly caster. He was no sadist. He just tried to do his job conscientiously. He was always ready to tuck his cassock under his belt and play baseball or football.

Under such men I learned virility and devoutness, mixed with the habit of facing whatever fate set in my path. I didn't have to learn a feeling for music and for rhythm. I was born with that. If I wasn't, there was a lot of it at home for me to sop up. Inevitably I tried to make it contribute a few dollars.

In 1921, towards the end of my first year at Gonzaga College, I joined a group of Spokane boys called the Musicaladers. None of us could read music, but we gave our own orchestral interpretation to arrangements which had been originated by the great bands of the time. Since the only other groups round town were playing stock arrangements sent out by publishing houses, we were a novelty for Spokane. Ragged, but novel. Young people liked us and we got dates to play at high school dances and private parties.

We had only a small repertoire, but we stretched it by playing the same tunes in different ways. We'd change the tempo: take a waltz and make a fox trot out of it. I did any singing that was done and played the drums.

My bass drum was decorated with a Japanese sunset and was illuminated inside. It had spikes in it to make it stick to the floor when I was

making it thump. Even with spikes, it was a highly ambulatory case. When I'd begin to beat the foot pedal, the vibration made the drum gradually inch forward. I hitched my chair along after it until I was well out in front of the band. Then I'd have to move back to start the next number.

Whatever else we were, we were different, and when the manager of the Clemmer Theatre in Spokane decided to put on stage shows before the pictures, he thought of us. We tried to do songs which would fit the pictures he'd booked. If the film featured the great outdoors or the North-west, we sang "By the Waters of Minnetonka" or "Indian Summer" or "Pale Moon." If it was laid in New Orleans, we sang blues songs.

Bailey's Music Company was Spokane's leading record store. I haunted it with my friend Al Rinker—a Musicalader who later became one of Paul Whiteman's Rhythm Boys. Mildred Rinker, known professionally as Mildred Bailey, was Rinker's sister. Mildred, of course, became one of the country's outstanding singing stars later on. Her records are still vocal classics, and she taught me much about singing and interpreting popular songs.



Bailey's Music Company was big about letting us spend all the time we wanted to in one of its listening rooms. We'd take a couple of records in and play them, and Al would memorize the piano chords while I remembered the soloist's style and vocal tricks. Then we'd rush home and practise before we forgot them.

Gradually the Musicaladers disintegrated, as several of the boys moved away or entered college. Only Al Rinker and I were left, working our singing act at the Clemmer Theatre.

In my third year of college I shifted to studying law, and worked part-time in the office of a legal counsel for the Great Northern Railway. My chief assignment was handling garnishments—attachments placed on the wages of Great Northern employees because of unpaid debts. Some of my friends worked at the Great Northern shops. If any of them drew a garnishment, I'd let them know first and give them an opportunity to draw their pay in advance. They were all young men making small salaries, and I didn't want to work a hardship on them.

It began to dawn on me that I was making as much money on the side, singing and playing the drums, as the legal counsel was paying his assistant. What was I doing pursuing the law when singing offered fatter financial possibilities? I talked it over with Al Rinker, and we decided to light out and head south.

My mother had just about given me up as a law student anyway. She knew that I'd be restless unless I had a whirl at show business, so she offered no adamant objections. By then Rinker's sister, Mildred Bailey, had moved to Los Angeles and we thought we could stay with her when we arrived there.

One day in 1925 Al and I took off in an old car which had belonged to the Musicaladers. It had cost them twenty-four dollars, but it was kind of beat up. It had no top, just a chassis. So we bought it for eight dollars. We were to change many a tyre with clincher rims between Spokane and Los Angeles, and the inner tubes were almost entirely patches before we got there. But painted on that flivver was: "Eight million miles and still enthusiastic."

When we started we had twenty dollars in our pockets and my drums on the back seat, and it took us a week or more to make the trip.

By the time we hit Bakersfield, California, our old car was held together almost entirely by youthful optimism. About eighty miles from

Los Angeles, she started to smoke and wheeze, and when she blew, she blew good. We just walked away and left her, carrying my drums. When we got near Hollywood, we phoned Mildred Bailey. She came and got us.

Mildred got us a successful audition with Marco, head of the Fanchon and Marco circuit, which put on stage presentations on the West Coast. Even at this point, I'd worked up a way of singing that people were calling "individual," and Al and I also popped a few jokes—I use the term loosely, but at least they had punch lines.

We went round Marco's circuit two or three times, and then picked up a date at what is now the Paramount Theatre in Los Angeles. While we were there Paul Whiteman heard about us, and asked us to an audition.

CHAPTER 3

TO Al Rinker and me it seemed incredible that Paul Whiteman—a man who in 1927 stood out above other American band leaders as Mount Everest stands out above other mountains—thought us good enough to ask us to appear with his band.

Our first meeting with him is one of my most vivid recollections. He had a little piano in his dressing-room, and we did a few numbers for him there. During our audition he sat on an ottoman, fragrant with toilet water and wearing a silk dressing-gown which must have cost *beaucoup* bob. He weighed over twenty-two stone and was eating caviar from a bowl. And he had a silver-plated ice-bucket of champagne beside him.

These, I thought, are the habiliments of success. This fellow is really there. He asked us if we'd join his organization at the Tivoli Theatre in Chicago when we'd completed our contract in Los Angeles which had a couple of weeks to run.

As Rinker and I rolled east, our routine began to seem countrified to us, and we began to wonder how we were going to put it over in a big city like Chicago, with a "sophisticated Mid-western audience."

When we reached Chicago we were definitely scared, and Pops Whiteman gave us a fight talk before our first show.

"Music's the same all over the country," Pops said. "They liked you in

Los Angeles and they'll like you here. You've nothing to worry about."

We listened, and when we walked out there to face our first matinée audience, we were cocky on the outside, but inside the butterflies were fluttering restlessly. Pops introduced us by telling the crowd, "I want you to meet a couple of boys I found in an ice-cream parlour in Walla Walla." Afterwards he told us he'd picked Walla Walla because its name sounded funny to him. Funny or not, it struck exactly the right note. If I do say it, we were very big.

When not doing our act, Al and I sat with other members of the band, pretending we could play instruments. To make it seem that I was tootling helpfully away, I was given a peck horn to hold; a peck horn is a tuba, sometimes called a rain catcher. Mine had a real, working mouthpiece at first but Whiteman took it away from me because I was unable to resist the impulse to fill in orchestral open spaces with exciting glissandos. He had a dummy mouthpiece substituted. "Rhapsody in Blue" has never sounded the same.

Heading east by way of Cleveland, we wound up in New York, where the team of Rinker and Crosby ran into a giant road-block. We went on at the Paramount and did exactly what we'd been doing in all the cities in which—to be immodest—we'd killed the citizens. In New York, with the same songs, we died. If we had never got anywhere, the blow wouldn't have been so lethal. But to come to New York, full of hope and confidence, and end up with egg on our faces—it was heartbreak.

Pops Whiteman stuck with us for a show or two, but after that he was driven to various dodges to keep us active. Among other things, we did a turn in the lobby at the Paramount to entertain the overflow. We got even less response there than we had on the stage. The people in the lobby paid little or no attention to us, although some kindly disposed waiters gave us half a bag of popcorn or a swatch of peanut brittle.

Pops also found other things for us to do. When his band opened in the Whiteman Club, his own night spot on Broadway, the proceedings began with two big curtains rolling back. Al and I operated those curtains.

Whiteman used us in some recordings, and I did an occasional solo. But New York had us licked. Al and I had lost our confidence, and since our routine was based on bounce and gaiety, the audience lost interest if we came out feeling whipped.



SOON after this, however, I got lucky again. One of the band's best arrangers made a special vocal arrangement of "Wistful and Blue" for Rinker and me. With it, we created a new singing style. Nothing for the ages, but a style. The best way to describe it was that it was vocal without words. We sang voh-do-de-oh phrases while the viola played as a third voice. As there had been nothing like it, it was very popular.

At that time, a fellow named Harry Barris was playing in New York at George Olsen's Club. He sang and played hot piano, slamming the top down from time to time to emphasize his phrases. Pops Whiteman heard him and offered him a job. Presently Barris, Rinker and I were teamed together under the label of "Paul Whiteman's Rhythm Boys."

Barris had written a song called "Mississippi Mud," and the three of us made a record of it. "Mississippi Mud" was something of a riot, so Barris worked on three or four other songs, among them "So the Bluebirds and the Blackbirds Got Together," and we put together a repertoire of numbers nobody else was singing. Pops put us on the floor in the Whiteman Club. The Rhythm Boys left the customers in sections—we fractured them. As far as Crosby and Rinker were concerned, it was a

return to our happy days at the Tivoli Theatre in Chicago all over again.

Soon we were so flushed with success that inertia set in and we didn't bother to learn any new songs. Moreover, we got a little tired of each other—as youngsters will. We couldn't decide which of us was boss. Every three or four weeks we decided to break up, then the next day we'd get back together again. Naturally, Whiteman was disgusted with us. We were supposed to go on his next concert tour, but the stuff we were doing wasn't suitable for a concert programme, so Whiteman booked us for a vaudeville tour over the Keith-Orpheum circuit. He equipped us with a big cardboard figure of himself and made a recording of an announcement introducing us.

We were supposed to play thirty-nine to forty solid weeks on the tour. But we didn't play them very solid. There were times when we didn't show up at all. Being young, we were irresponsible. Life was, to use a phrase popular then, our "bowl of cherries." We took time out to savour it.

WITH the conclusion of our tour, we returned to Whiteman's band to discover that Hollywood was standing at the threshold of a trend which was to affect my life powerfully—musical pictures. Universal Pictures decided to build a mammoth musical round Whiteman. In 1930, after lengthy negotiations, a deal was made for us all to go to California and make *The King of Jazz*.

We worked on that picture for an age. Picture techniques weren't developed then the way they are now, and musical numbers took as much as a week to shoot. Pops had promised me a song, "Song of the Dawn," in the picture. It was a big production number and was a tremendous break for me. I rehearsed and rehearsed, then took time out to see Southern California play California at Los Angeles. There was quite a party after the game in our recreation bungalow at Universal. Some young ladies were present and I volunteered to take one of them home in my flivver with its top modishly down.

She lived at the Roosevelt Hotel. When I tried to make a left turn into her hostelry—at seven or eight miles an hour—another motorist slammed into my rear and threw us out of the car. My passenger was cut up and I took her into the hotel lobby and tried to stanch the flow

of blood. While I was thus engaged, a gendarme tapped my shoulder. He had in his clutches the fellow who had run into me, and he took us both to the jug. In the morning Whiteman came and bailed me out. The charge against me was "reckless driving and suspicion of drinking."

The judge at my trial was a militant prohibitionist, but no one had told me that. "It says on the complaint 'H.B.D.,'" he said. "That means 'Had Been Drinking.' Is that true?"

"I had a couple," I said.

"Don't you know there's a Prohibition law in this country?"

"Yes," I said, "but nobody pays much attention to it."

He snapped his mouth shut like the lid of a roll-top desk closing, and said, "You'll have sixty days in which to pay attention to it."

So I was flung into durance vile. After a couple of days my brother Everett came to see me. He told me that Pops Whiteman had tried to hold my song for me, but when I couldn't be freed, they had given it to another singer, John Boles.

Towards the end of the picture a number with the Rhythm Boys had been arranged. They couldn't find a suitable substitute for me, so the law let me out once a day in custody of an officer to work in the film. The cop had the time of his life. To him, being on a movie set was really living. I served about forty days before my sentence was commuted.

Whiteman was sore about the whole thing, but when he cooled off he admitted that I'd been a victim of circumstances. I certainly wasn't speeding. I'd had a drink or two, but I was sober.

It seems to me in reading back over what I've written here that there's been some talk about a character named John Barleycorn. If that's the way it was, that's the way it should be told. However, I'd like to insert a note to the effect that although I was guilty of a few youthful indiscretions in the late 1920's and early '30's, once I got those injudicious moments out of my system, I never let liquor interfere with my work.

When we finished *The King of Jazz*, we played West Coast theatre dates with Whiteman. It was in Portland that I got into an argument with Pops. It ended with his saying, "You don't seem to be too serious. You're just having a good time touring and living off the fat of the land and getting arrested. When we get to Seattle, we'll part friends and that'll be the end of it."

I don't want to say good-bye to Whiteman in this tale without paying him a tribute for being so patient and long-suffering with me. When I was younger and more hot-headed, I used to think he should line my pockets with more gold. But I confess he owes me nothing. It's the other way round.

I have often wondered what might have happened to me if I had sung "Song of the Dawn" in place of John Boles. It certainly helped him. But my crooning style wouldn't have been very good for such a number, which was supposed to be delivered "robusto," like "The Song of the Vagabonds." I might have flopped. I might never have been given another crack at a song in any picture.

CHAPTER 4

AFTER Rinker, Barris and I left Whiteman, we got a job singing at the Montmartre Café in Los Angeles.

The Montmartre was a favourite hang-out of the film colony, and as sometimes happens when fresh instrumentalists or vocalists come to town, we became an overnight fad. Those who "discovered" us asked others, "Have you caught the Rhythm Boys at the Montmartre?" It happened later to a lad named Vallee and to a good-looking youngster named Russ Columbo. Much later it happened to Frank Sinatra. I'm glad it happened to me then because it brought Dixie Lee to the Montmartre.

The first time I ever heard the name "Dixie Lee," I rolled it on my tongue like honey. Dixie's real name was Wilma Winifred Wyatt. She came from Harriman, Tennessee. She was brought up in New Orleans, then her family moved to Chicago. When she was a seventeen-year-old high school girl, she won a contest for the Chicago girl "who sang most like Ruth Etting." Dixie's prize was a two-week singing engagement at the College Inn, a restaurant-night club in the Sherman Hotel.

She was working at the old Fox Studio when she came to the Montmartre on a date with actor Frankie Albertson, and Frankie introduced us. She came back several times after that. I couldn't tell whether she came back to hear the band or me. But I knew what I hoped.

The head man at Dixie's studio had fine, large, glittering plans for her. He told her that if she married me, it would interfere with those

plans. One of the things they told Dixie was that if she threw in her lot with me, she'd have to support me for the rest of her life. She did support me for the rest of her life, but not in the way they meant. The kind of support Dixie gave me and her sons was more important than money. She was an understanding and loyal wife, a wise and loving mother. We could always count on her for the truth about ourselves, and that's a rare and helpful commodity in Hollywood.

Not only was there opposition to our marriage from her studio, but her father took a dim view of me. He thought, and with just cause, that rated on past performances I was a useless, good-for-nothing type. I hadn't been too industrious. I'd played golf and had a good time. I couldn't seem to be serious about anything.

Our marriage was regarded as newsworthy by the press, but it was because of Dixie, not me. It was a case of Miss Big marrying Mr. Little. The papers knew so little about me that the headlines read WELL-KNOWN FOX MOVIE STAR MARRIES BING CROVENY. Croveny, indeed!

When my name became better known, I could count on Dixie to keep my head from getting too big. Like any wise wife, whenever she thought my ego was getting out of hand, she had her methods for shrinking me to proper size. She'd say, "Listen to the Romantic Singer of the Songs-You-Love-to-Hear Blues." Or she'd call me "The Bumptious Baritone" or "Ole Gravel Throat." Or, when I'd try ineffectually to lecture the kids, she'd say, "You're foolin' the people, but you can't fool them, eh?"

Dixie never wanted to cut a lot of ice. She had a good agent who did a terrific job for her, but she hated the things he wanted her to do. As a part of pushing her career, he asked her to give out interviews, or go to benefits, or make radio broadcasts to exploit pictures. Then there was the business of being sweet to studio executives who, instinct told her, didn't rate sweetness or even civility. She tried to do these things, but she died inside as she did them.

Although she was very frank and outspoken, she was also diffident and shy. She never did think she was good in show business. I've known all the others, and when it came to singing a song, Dixie had no equal. But it was a matter of life and death to persuade her to sing.

She cut a couple of records with me later on, but no one will ever

know the ordeal I went through persuading her to make them. Building the Pyramids would have been easier.

She talked to our four sons as if they were her own age. She always wanted them to have an adult point of view. She didn't want them ever to be diffident, as she was.

She never got over her dislike of interference with her private life. After she stopped being an actress and a singer, she gave only a few interviews to personal friends in the newspaper or magazine business. If a stranger tried to interview her, she was scared to death. She just wanted her family, home and friends.

WITH the coming of fame, Barris and Rinker and I had been booked at the Cocoanut Grove night club. Meanwhile, we three had become regular callers over the Mexican border at Agua Caliente, driving about a hundred and fifty miles each way and playing roulette, golf and the races and knocking back a little tequila—a fermented Mexican drink. Towards the end of our engagement at the Grove we didn't take our responsibilities seriously enough to suit Abe Frank, the owner. He was an elderly, serious sort, and when people were supposed to appear, he expected them to be on deck. So, when I failed to get back for a show once too often, he docked my wages. Of course Abe was within his rights, but I thought he was pretty small about it, so I left.

I was encouraged in this defiance by an offer from Mack Sennett to make a series of movie shorts for him. I made a couple of pictures at Sennett's and then Abe Frank plastered a union ban on me for "failure to fulfil the standard musician's contract." After that, union musicians weren't allowed to work with me. To get round the boycott Sennett used a pipe organ or an unaccompanied choir in the background.

The way we made those Sennett shorts reads like a quaint piece of Americana. For two days we'd have a story conference. Everybody was in on it—actors, cameramen, gagmen and Sennett. Once we had the nugget of a plot, Sennett would start "writing," I use "writing" for want of a better word. He put nothing down on paper. His story was really a series of physical gags. I'd be dunked in a tank and fish would get down my shirt front or quick-rising dough would envelop me in a gooey bubble bath. Sennett shot these scenes only once. With a two-day shooting schedule, he couldn't waste time.



My run-in with Abe Frank was the end of the Rhythm Boys. I went to see him a couple of times to see if he'd let us off the hook, but he said, "You either accept the fine and come back to work at the Grove or nothing doing."

Only a couple of hundred dollars was involved, but his attitude brought out the mule in me. Nevertheless, I had to have work, for I was married now. I had been paid six hundred dollars for each Sennett short, and while that didn't make me a millionaire, it had made me feel that I could support Dixie Lee if she'd have me. I proposed to her over a plate of chicken in the Cocoanut Grove, and she said, "I think it would be a good idea."

Neither one of us brooded overlong about the seriousness of the step we were taking. We were very much in love. This was it.

About that time my brother Everett entered the picture. He began to handle pieces of my business, and he stirred up interest in me on the part of the Columbia Broadcasting System's president, William Paley.

This seems a good time to tell about the part Everett has played in my career. It would be dramatic to say that if it hadn't been for Everett I'd be lying somewhere with my head on a kerb. It would also be an exaggeration. Everett didn't save me from being down and out. But he fired me with a spirit of git-up-and-git. He supplied the ambition I seemed to lack.

Everett's a good mixer. He's a hustler. He was able to reach Paley and equally important people in the broadcasting business and sell them on my possibilities as a radio singer. Later, he was able to do the same thing in Hollywood.

He seems fond of bickering with movie producers or radio sponsors, and he'll drag the discussions out happily for days, weeks, months, even years, if he thinks he can get me a better deal. He loves to go to their offices or get them to come to his, where he pounds the table and hollers and walks up and down. Perhaps it's because he's such a good bargainer that he's not always popular with those for whom I work. As a result, he is sometimes called "The Wrong Crosby."

When Everett and I went to New York early in 1931 to meet Paley, Everett worked out a deal for me to go on the radio on a sustaining basis when, as, and if I could get Abe Frank's union ban against me lifted. I had had a lawyer trying to straighten out the situation for me in

California, but because of my stubbornness, he hadn't been successful. We got hold of that lawyer, and made a settlement. Then I was free to go to work for Paley.

In addition to my radio stint Everett booked me into the Paramount Theatre in New York. The Paramount used me as a master of ceremonies. I sang a song or two, worked in with some of the speciality acts, or played straight for visiting comics. I found I could be quite the chatty fellow. Often, I came up with *le bon mot* or *le mot juste*, as the case required. Probably something I'd lifted, but it may have been due to the fact that in college and high school I'd been fascinated with words and their meanings. I'd discovered that there was a book called a thesaurus, and I'd carried it round with me. I still get a kick out of words. I may use them badly, but I enjoy trying them for size.

CHAPTER 5

MY NEXT tussle with the movies was even more abortive than when I was one of the Rhythm Boys. Paramount brought me back West to sing a song in a picture called *Confessions of a Co-ed*. But when the picture was edited, I was only an off-stage voice. I can't even remember now the name of the song I sang.

But some of the studio's brains must have heard me on the radio, for when Paramount conceived the notion of a picture featuring prominent radio performers, they signed Burns and Allen, the Mills Brothers, Kate Smith, a treacle-voiced performer known as The Street Singer—and me. Someone fluffed up a story, called *The Big Broadcast*, which would permit the use of our various talents. Paramount did four or five of those *Big Broadcast* films before they turned to something else.

A bit later, I landed in something called *Too Much Harmony*. *Too Much Harmony* was up to its ears in comedians. There were Jack Oakie, Skeets Gallagher, Ned Sparks and I don't know how many others. I'll never forget the first day of shooting. About all I managed to get in, competing with such experienced ad-libbers, was a few nods. Oakie dubbed me "Old Hinge Neck."

Oakie is my nomination for one of the all-time motion-picture greats. His timing was marvellous, and he could make funny faces better than anybody I ever saw. Since he knew all the tricks, he was tough to work

with in a scene. He was a master at upstaging and twisting you round so that his face was in the camera while you talked to the backdrop. After he'd had his way with me, all the audience could see of me on film was my ears, which would surely be hard to miss. But I didn't care. If I'm doing a comedy scene with a great comedian, I like to throw the scene to him and play it straight myself. That way we'll get a good scene, and if we get enough good scenes, we've got a good picture. All any actor whose head is not a blob of bubble gum should care about is to be associated with a good picture. If he ends up with most of the footage and the picture's a flop, what's he accomplished?

I've had it written into my movie contract from the start that I am not to be starred alone. I think anybody in motion pictures needs to be associated with good actors and big names with marquee strength. If I let them put "Bing Crosby" over the title of the picture, and the rest of the cast in small type, people would say, "Well, he certainly thinks he's a big shot." They'd expect greater things from a "big shot" than I'm able to deliver. Then, too, if you share your billing with your fellow players, it keeps them happy. To a lot of people, billing is mighty important. They liked to say "I was co-starred with so-and-so in such-and-such a picture."

Lastly—and selfishly—I don't want to be the only star in the picture, because if it's a failure, I want some fellow sufferers. I am averse to having one of my pictures referred to as "Crosby's last omelette." Let somebody else take some of the beaten egg.

When I'm doing a movie, I always look at the "rushes," the previous day's work, after lunch. I dare not do so before lunch—my appetite would be ruined. Almost anybody in pictures has that kind of reaction. You always look lousy to yourself up there on the screen. You're either over-acting or under-acting, doing nothing or doing the wrong thing. And you always think, "If I had that to do over again, I'd do it differently."

For that matter, I've been in several pictures I've never seen at all. I didn't feel they were much good when they were being made, and I didn't force myself to look at them when they were finished.

NEXT on my schedule after *Too Much Harmony* was one of Marion Davies's last flings at movie-making. The picture was called *Going*

Hollywood, and it was a pet project of William Randolph Hearst.

Brother Everett made the deal with Hearst. It was a clash of two great dealers, but while their haggling ended as a photo finish, it turned out to be much better than that for the *frères* Crosby. Our arrangement with Hearst was made on a weekly-payment basis, at two thousand dollars a week. This proved to be a stroke of genius on Everett's part, for the picture took six months to complete.

Going Hollywood was directed by Raoul Walsh. I'd been told that Raoul liked to live thoroughly, without stinting himself. This picture gave him leeway to indulge his natural bent. Our average day's shooting went like this: I'd show up at nine o'clock, made up and ready to shoot. At about eleven Marion would appear, followed by her entourage of hairdressers, make-up ladies, secretary and—a hold-over from the silent days—a five-piece orchestra. This band was not on hand to help her achieve a desired mood. It was there because she liked music to entertain her between shots.

When the orchestra showed up with Marion, it broke into her favourite songs. We enjoyed the musicale until eleven-thirty. Then we'd discuss the first scene with Raoul, who, up to that time, might have been leading the orchestra or driving golf balls into a canvas net on the set. By that time it was twelve-fifteen and luncheon was announced.

Lunch dawdled on until two-thirty. Then we went back to the set. Marion's make-up would have to be re-renewed—which would take time—and I'd need a slight retread. About three the orchestra would launch into a few more *divertissements*. At five we'd be ready to shoot the scene when Marion would suggest something refreshing. Nobody was ever loath, so, thus restored, we'd get the scene shot and start thinking about the next one.

It's my guess that in an average day of such toil we wrapped up as much as a hundred and fifty feet of usable film. Maybe not that much.

There were a number of musical numbers in the picture, among them a wonderful song called "Temptation." A lot of singers have got effective mileage out of it since. "Temptation" was my first attempt at presenting a song dramatically. In the picture I played an entertainer "with faults." Marion had given me the air for my misdeeds and I'd gone to Tijuana to get away from it all. There I'd gone on a tequila diet, grown a beard and become a derelict. I sang "Temptation" to a glass of tequila,

while tears dripped into my beard from the circles under my eyes. Through trick photography, a dame's face appeared in the glass of tequila; then, at the end of the song, I flung the glass at the wall and staggered out into the night. It was all very Russian Art Theatre.

Going Hollywood put me in the first ten of the Box Office Poll, with such people as Will Rogers and Wallace Beery. It was the first time I'd come within smoke-signalling distance of that hallowed circle. For, in spite of all the monkey-tricks in the making of *Going Hollywood*, it turned into a rather good picture.

It was in the 1934 film, *She Loves Me Not*, that I made my brave stand against having my ears glued back to increase my beauty. This nuisance had its beginning when I was courting Dixie. Jim Ryan, a casting director at Fox, made me sing a couple of songs and read a few lines, and he seemed to like the way I did them. But then he said, "I'm afraid there's no future for you in pictures."

"Why not?" I asked.

"The ears are wingy," he said.

I thought he said, "The years are winging." I wasn't very old and I reacted hard.

"I don't mean your age," he said. "Your ears protrude. A camera



pointed straight at you would make you look like a taxi with both doors open. They'd have to photograph you three-quarter-face or profile, and that would put too much of a limit on the cameraman. I'm sorry." I went out feeling pretty crestfallen.

Seven or eight years later I became a parishioner of the Church of the Good Shepherd in Beverly Hills. Jim Ryan is a member of the congregation and we sit near each other. I always get up and go out before he does, and I never fail to bat my ears significantly at him as I go by. We both grin.

Paramount shared Ryan's view of my ears as a photographic problem and they insisted on gluing them back against my head with spirit gum. I must admit that I was surprised at what the gluing did to my appearance. I looked streamlined, like a whippet dashing after a mechanical bunny. I put up with the spirit gum for a long time, though it was disagreeable. Then, too, no matter how firmly my ears were pinned back, they kept popping out.

One of the scenes from *She Loves Me Not* had to be heavily lighted and the heat kept loosening the stickum; my ears popped out eight or ten times. The tenth time I said, "This time they're going to stay out."

"I've got orders not to shoot you that way," the cameraman told me.

"They're out and they're going to stay out," I said. "I'll be at the Lakeside Golf Club. If the studio changes its mind, tell them to call me there."

The first tee at Lakeside is my refuge when the studio is obdurate about what seems to me a reasonable request. If I'm convinced that they are being bull-headed, I retire there to await developments. Finally a man at the studio telephoned. "We'll shoot them sticking out if you feel so strongly about it," he said. So *She Loves Me Not* was shot partly with them out and partly with them in. In the first part I looked like a whippet in full flight. In the second part I looked like Dumbo. They've been out ever since.

Robert Hope is sometimes goaded by his own lack of physical charms into referring to me as "skin head." I don't have to specify what he means. It's generally known that for screen purposes I wear a device the trade calls a "scalp doily," a "mucket" or a "divot." The technical name for it is a hair piece.

I hate to put it on, and I'm always trying to have interior scenes taken

out of doors, so that I can wear a hat. Each morning when I get a script, I look through it to see if there's any way I can get through the day without donning a mucket. The glue in it makes my forehead itch, and I can't scratch the itching places without pulling it off. I'm always plotting ways to do a love scene wearing a hat. In one scene I was to meet a girl at a railway station and greet her with a big embrace. "You'll have to take your hat off for this one," the director said firmly.

If he thought I'd give up that easily, he'd misjudged me. "Not me," I said. "This fellow's so excited at seeing his girl he doesn't remember to take his hat off. He just grabs her—and after that he's too busy."

In *The Road to Morocco*, I tried to wear a hat in bed, but Dave Butler, the director, was obdurate. I finally talked him into a nightcap with a tassel.

In *We're Not Dressing*, another prewar movie I did, Carole Lombard and I were co-stars. Burns and Allen, a live bear, and Ethel Merman—who is quite a bear herself—were the featured players.

Carole could lay tongue to more colourful epithets than any other woman I've ever known, and more than most men. Oddly enough, you were never shocked when she swore. Her swear-words weren't obscene. They were gusty and eloquent. They had honest zing!

She had a delicious sense of humour, she was one of the screen's greatest comedienne, and, in addition, she was very beautiful. The electricians, carpenters and prop men all adored her. The feeling of camaraderie Carole gave the men who worked with her was a victory of mental attitude over matter, the matter in her case being curvy, blonde and melting. The fact that she could make us think of her as a good guy rather than a sexy mamma is impossible to explain. All I can say is, that was the way it was.

This led to an experience on her part I'm sure no other woman has ever had, for when one of the lads in our entourage decided to play a strictly male locker-room practical joke on her, it seemed the most natural thing in the world.

The shipwreck in *We're Not Dressing* was shot at Catalina near the St. Catherine Hotel, where we stayed for two or three weeks. It was November, the water was very cold, and we had to jump from a barge out of camera range into water up to our necks and wade beachward

towards a camera while five or six thousand tourists were standing behind the ropes and watching the scene.

Carole dressed in a tent on the beach. The Katzenjammer-joker type told her that if she was afraid of cold water she ought to get a bottle of oil of wintergreen and rub it over her entire body. Just before the camera began to roll, Carole went to her tent and dutifully doused her body with wintergreen. As many a footballer and track man has learned to his bitter sorrow, wintergreen applied indiscriminately to the skin creates an intolerable burning sensation. The victim instinctively dashes for the nearest shower and turns on the cold water, only to discover that cold water increases the burning sensation, while the playful pals who have suggested the oil treatment roll in helpless mirth on the floor.

The flaps of Carole's tent burst open, she appeared practically unclothed, flew to the beach on the dead run, squatted down and began to splash water over herself. Anybody else would have been embarrassed by the eyes peering at her from behind the ropes. Not Carole. She had something else on her mind.

For a while she made shrill noises like a narrow-gauge locomotive labouring uphill. Then recognizable words emerged from her. The eloquence of her invective surpassed anything she'd ever achieved before, and the rest of us stood in awe-struck admiration. We also began to look round for places in which to hide. But our supposition that she had a man's point of view was right. Once the wintergreen began to wear off, she began to laugh. I can think of no other woman star who would have gone ahead with the scene after such an ordeal. Carole went back to her tent, dressed, emerged once more and said, "Now, where were we?" When I think of her I find myself saying, "What a woman!" They haven't made many like her.

A lot of old maids and widows living on small fixed incomes were staying on Catalina at the St. Catherine Hotel. It was a family-type hostelry, and our movie company was an exciting experience to the guests. We ate at two or three huge tables in the dining-room. The smaller tables were occupied by the regulars, who strained their ears to drink in the racy things they were sure we were saying. Carole was annoyed with this constant eaves-dropping. We were eating breakfast one morning when she came slinking in with that feline walk of hers. All eyes swivelled round to watch her, and she decided that this was

the time to make up something shocking. She was the girl who could do it.

She called across the dining-room, "Bing!"

"What?" I asked.

"Did I leave my nightie in your room last night?"

The spinsters almost dropped their teeth. I've never heard such tch, tch, tching and gasps in my life. After that they gave us a wide berth. Some of them even stopped eating in the dining-room.

EARLIER in this story I talked about making *Going My Way*, but I haven't mentioned the public's reaction to my playing Father O'Malley in it.

I'd heard of the public identifying actors and actresses with roles, but this was the first time I'd got the full treatment myself. Not long after *Going My Way* was released, I attended a dinner party at the home of my friend, Jack Morse. Before dinner, hors-d'oeuvres were served, among them toasted frankfurters on toothpicks. They were served by a grey-haired, motherly-looking maid from the Ould Sod. It happened to be Friday, and when I absent-mindedly took one of the frankfurters, I thought she'd have a stroke. "Holy Mother! Father Crosby!" she burst out, snatching it from my hot little hand, "you're not going to eat one of those!" The other guests collapsed with laughter, and she retreated in confusion to the kitchen. I was a little confused myself.

That maid wasn't unique in confusing me with Father O'Malley. From Africa to Japan came letters addressed to Father Crosby. All kinds of communities wanted me to drop whatever I was doing, visit them for a while and form singing groups for children to keep them out of trouble, the way I'd done in *Going My Way*.

When the picture was released and became one of the greatest box-office successes in movie history, thousands of people asked where Leo McCarey got his conception of Barry Fitzgerald as Father Fitzgibbons.

My own answer to this question is that Father Fitzgibbons was a blend of several priests. One of them, I believe, might have been a delightful priest whose parish for years was in Palm Springs. He's retired now, having called it a day when he was eighty-two. Many of his congregation were—like myself—fugitives from the motion-picture colony who dwelt in the resort town from time to time.



There's one story about him I like. It was getting chilly in Palm Springs, and one Sunday quite a few of his flock had colds. They were honking their heads off during his sermon. Finally, digressing from his topic, he said, "There's a good deal of hackin', coughin', sneezin', and snifflin' goin' on in here which is very distrachtin' to your pastor, so distrachtin' that it is difficult for me to keep my mind on what I'm tryin' to say.

"If ye have colds," he went on, "ye can't help coughin' and sneezin' and snifflin', but I should think you would take some shteps to avoid contractin' these colds. Ye come here to Palm Springs, and the gentlemen amongst ye, ye wear the shorts and the tropic shirts, and the lhadies amongst ye wear your bare midriffs and your sun suits. You're not dacently dressed.

"You should follow the example of your pastor. I've lived here forty-some years and I wear long underwear from November till May. And I've never had a cold in me life. If ye'd folly my example and clothe yourself properly ye wouldn't be havin' these colds and ye wouldn't be comin' to church and distrachtin' your pastor."

Having given this advice, he resumed his topic and finished his sermon. He'd gone back to the altar when a horried thought struck him. Wheeling, he cried to the congregation, "Mind ye, now, I change once a week." Then he finished the Mass.

CHAPTER 6

Not long after *We're Not Dressing*, Dixie and I became the parents of twins. We didn't conform to the custom followed by some in Hollywood of letting the columnists know about the advent eight months in advance. We were old-fashioned enough to announce the arrival of our sons only upon delivery.

But when our twins were in the offing, complications set in. About the sixth month, Dixie had a siege of false labour and the doctor was alarmed for fear she would lose the baby. He thought she ought to have some X-rays, and the X-rays disclosed that there were going to be twins. Somehow or other this news leaked out, as things will leak out in a hospital.

The news leak didn't annoy me as much as it otherwise might have done, for I had something more important to worry about. The X-rays showed that one of the twins had his body so arranged that it was interfering with Dixie's kidneys. She claimed later that it was Dennis. And when he grew older and she kidded him about being cantankerous, she added, "You started out that way."

Her doctor put her to bed, kept her quiet, and sent her to the hospital at the end of seven and a half months, so that he could keep an eye on her well in advance of delivery. I checked in at the hospital every day, but as luck would have it the day I went to Santa Monica to play in a golf tournament, the twins were born. It was no surprise to Dixie that I was on the golf course then. That's where I spend most of my time anyhow. But it gave her a beautiful opening when anybody asked her if I played much golf.

"He wasn't even there when the twins were born. He was out playing golf," she'd say, giving it the full Eleonora Duse-Sarah Bernhardt treatment. Sometimes, after she had finished needling me, I noticed people who didn't know either of us very well looking at me as if I were the heel of the world.

I've tried to keep my personal life pretty much to myself, but it's tough to do in Hollywood. The studio publicity departments face the task of publicizing a star and his pictures, and anything that concerns that particular star is grist for their mill. Sometimes it's difficult to turn a studio down when it wants such material. Ronald Colman made it, but I guess I'm just one of the boys. I don't have his remote dignity or any of his ability. •

About the time the twins were born I imported the rest of my family to California. Everett was already there, but it seemed a good idea to close the Crosby ranks and have Larry and my father and mother by my side, too. Dad was getting on in years, and since my youngest brother, Bob, had struck out for himself, and my sisters were married, nobody was at home with Dad and Mother. I took a house for them and put Dad in charge of handling my banking and taking care of the securities I'd squirrelled away. He came in about ten each morning, had lunch, and worked until two. Then he went to a ball game or to the races.

He took some trips to New York and went to the Kentucky Derby every year. He was able to do all the things he'd wanted to do all his life, but had never been able to do because he'd been too busy feeding seven mouths. The last ten or fifteen years of his life were happy ones for him. Being able to make them that way gave me more satisfaction than anything I've ever done.

One of the activities my family was able to help me with when they rallied round was handling the financial affairs connected with my recordings. When I started to make records with Brunswick, Jack Kapp was the recording manager. When a disc outfit called Decca was born, Jack went over to Decca from Brunswick, and it was he who formulated my recording plans. He was wise enough to make me work with a variety of bands and sing duets with different artists, so as to give the listeners a change of pace. This policy helped keep me alive as a recording artist long after the average performer is washed up.

Jack's progressive plans for me were due to the fact that he had a much higher opinion of me than I had of myself. He often selected things for me a cut above ordinary popular songs. I sang hill-billies and blues, ballads and Victor Herbert, traditional songs and patriotic songs, light opera, and even an opera aria or two.

Jack had a lot of trouble talking me into recording "Adeste Fideles."

Being only a crooner, I felt that I didn't have sufficient stature to sing a song with religious implications. But Jack insisted that "Adeste Fideles" was more a Christmas carol than a religious song. I recorded it. I'm glad I did.

"Silent Night" was different. I didn't feel that it fitted into the carol category. Moreover, I thought that for me to take income from the sale of such a record would be like cashing in on the Church or the Bible. But brother Larry set up a fund for the children then being taken care of by American missions in China. We poured the royalties from "Silent Night" into this fund until the Government, looking for fresh tax money, ruled that our scheme was illegal. By that time we'd probably put a quarter of a million dollars into it. When the war came along, Larry assembled an entertainment unit for Army camps which was financed with money from the "Silent Night" fund.

I had something to do with another song, Irving Berlin's "White Christmas," which has become a modern Christmas carol by popular acclaim. Every Christmas it booms out of department-store loudspeakers over the heads of shoppers and street-corner Santas. In the trade, "White Christmas" is known as a "standard." It's a great song with a simple melody, and nowadays anywhere I go I have to sing it. It's as much a part of me as "When the Blue of the Night" or my floppy ears.

It was Hope who thought up the vulgarization, "groaner," for the word "crooner." I've been asked, more times than I could shake an answer at, when the word crooner was invented. It originally meant someone who crooned into a small megaphone or made mooing noises into a microphone. In France they call a crooner a *chanteur de charme*. I suppose this means a singer of charm, although it seems a loose term to describe me.

Crooner connotes a slurring of words until they're mashed together in a hot mush in the mouth. When I'm asked to describe what I do, I say, "I'm not a singer; I'm a phraser." That means that I don't think of a song in terms of notes; I try to think of what it purports to say lyrically. That way it sounds more natural, and anything natural is more listenable.

COMES now a mention of my ten-year employment by the Kraft Music Hall, beginning in December 1935.

The names of those who appeared with me on the Kraft show are a

Social Register of the loftiest opera and concert artists in the business, but I had fun with them just the same. Those long-hairs go for humanizing in a big way. I never had any trouble with them about song material, or what we were going to talk about.

We were careful never to make my guests seem tawdry or cheap, or trick them into buffoonery. They got a kick out of yaketing about baseball or horse racing. I'd sing an aria with them and they'd sing a popular song with me.

Everything was going well with the Kraft programme until I launched my battle for a transcribed radio hour. There was great opposition to the notion from the whole radio industry.

There were two reasons why I wanted to transcribe my radio shows. First, it gave me a chance to do a better show. By using tape, I could do a thirty-five- or forty-minute show, then edit it down to the twenty-six or twenty-seven minutes the programme ran. In that way, we could use only the prime meat of the show. It gave us a chance to ad lib, knowing that excess ad libbing could be sliced from the final product.

A second consideration—and a mighty important one to me, personally—was that it would give me a chance to get round the country more if I could tape in advance.

But everybody was against the idea—the networks, the sponsors of other shows, the advertising agencies. They thought it might hurt the network financially. They felt that if entertainers were allowed to tape, they could sell to individual stations instead of having to use the network. Finally, Philco said that it would be okay with them if I taped a certain number of shows. The way it worked out, taping didn't seem to hurt the networks, and now almost everybody on the air—including Bob Hope, Jack Benny, Groucho Marx—is doing it.

EVERYBODY KNOWS I've made a lot of money out of show business. The fact that I've been able to save any of it is directly due to the guiding hand of John O'Melveny. Jack is a genial and expansive Irishman. He's been at the helm of my fitfully tossing career ship for some twenty years now. Every penny I've made, after taxes, he has not only husbanded but has increased appreciably.

I have no intention of larding this story up with an interminable summary of my assorted business enterprises, even though they are

extensive if not always successful. Among other things, I'm interested in a frozen-orange-juice agency, a national ice-cream-distributing set-up, a production company turning out TV short films, and a project which is the brain child of Brother Everett and which bears the coy name, Bing's Things. There's also a corporation called the Bing Crosby Enterprises, set up as a catch-all for capital gains. Some of these capers have made a little money, some have lost.

I might also mention the Pittsburgh Pirates, in which club I've invested a bundle of what the financial lads call "venture money." It's my fervent hope that the Pittsburgh fans will be rewarded for their long-suffering patience with a team of which they can be proud. Hurry, day! In a careless moment I promised my four baseball-maniac sons that if Pittsburgh ever got into the World Series, I'd charter a private railway coach and transport them and any number of their buddies eastward for the big event. I hope I'll have to pay for that train ride yet.

To some dads, home is a place where he can retire to the peace and quiet of the family hearthstone. Not me. Home is where I catch such questions battled at me as "Why isn't So-and-So a starting pitcher?" "Why don't we buy Stan Musial and Jackie Robinson?" "What's the matter with the Pirates anyhow?" Great second guessers are the four junior Crosbys, as well as Pirate scouts without portfolio. Not a day passes in which they don't try to sell me on some youth they've caught in a back yard or in a semi-pro league. Candour compels me to admit that the Pirates have signed up a couple such at their suggestion.

Maybe some of the luck I've had will rub off on the Pirates some day. Perhaps most people don't remember it, but when I started to make a picture called *Going My Way*, I put on the uniform of the lowly St. Louis Browns, and by the time the picture was released, they'd won the pennant! It seemed impossible, but it happened. Wouldn't it be wonderful if this could happen to the Pirates! Wonderful, but incredible.

CHAPTER 7

ONE of the best things that's happened to me along the way is a ten-and-a-half-stone Irish leprechaun named Johnny Burke, who's written the lyrics for such songs as "Pennies From Heaven" and "Swinging on a Star"—a 1944 Academy Award winner. Johnny had known

Dixie when she worked at Fox and he'd written a song for her then called "The Boop-Boop-a-Doop Trot." Later Dixie and I had a lot of laughs over that title, but in the late 1920's it was considered very jazzy.

It is Johnny Burke who says that he has met at least a hundred and twenty taxi drivers who claim to have helped me out of the Cocoon Grove when I was singing there and "was wobbly on my pins." He also claims that there's another large club of those who "saw a slightly tipsy Crosby fall through a drum."

I run into scores of such "eyewitnesses" myself. They are blood cousins to the hundreds and hundreds of people who went to school with me—or with any other star. When people tell me that they have a friend who went to school with me, I ask, "What school?" They usually say "North Central" or "Lewis and Clark," two public high schools in Spokane which I never attended. I just tell them, "Yes," and let it go at that.

Johnny Burke's appearance is deceptive. He looks guileless, but he's the most enthusiastic rib artist I've ever known. His reputation is like that of the lad who got his kicks calling "Wolf, wolf." Which brings me to the day in 1943 when my house burnt down.

The fire broke out one afternoon shortly after Christmas. Dixie always saw to it that we had a beautifully symmetrical Christmas tree, usually done in white, with all the balls of one colour. The tree was two stories high and very imposing. A short circuit in the tree lights started the blaze while Dixie and the boys were at home. Nothing burns faster than a dry Christmas tree. My family stood outside and watched their home burn to the ground.

I had a date to play golf and then dine at the Brown Derby. The house burnt down in mid-afternoon and I was paged by telephone round town, but since no one knew where I was golfing, I couldn't be reached. Burke, who was a neighbour of ours then, did most of the phoning. Finally he reached me at the Derby and said, "Bing, this is Johnny. There's nothing to be concerned about, Dixie and the kids are all right, but your house has just burnt down."

I thought it a bald approach for a guy who was supposed to be so clever at ramming home the needle. "All right, Johnny," I said. "Good luck to you, too. I thought you were more adroit than that!" Then I hung up. No sooner had I sat down than the phone rang again. It was Burke once more. This time he repeated his tale with such passionate sincerity that

I believed him. He reported that the fire was out and that he was with my family at Bill Goodwin's house, two doors down the street from us.

I drove out to view the ruins. The house was a shell; the staircases were still there, but the roof was gone. It was during the racing season. I'd won a little on the races and I had two thousand dollars stuck in the toe of a sports shoe in my dressing-room. The ways of the human mind are peculiar. There I was with my home gutted, but as I got out of my car and walked through the ruins, I was thinking only of that loot in my boot. The firemen met me upstairs and followed me down the hall through what was left of my house. I went into my dressing-room, picked up a scorched shoe, reached in and took out the wad I'd stowed in it.

I said good-bye to the firemen, who'd watched me, pop-eyed, and joined my family at Bill Goodwin's. We were feeling pretty blue trying to work out where we'd live when Dave Shelley, a friend, sauntered in. He'd passed the ruins of my house on the way.

"Hi, Bing," he said brightly, "what's new?"

As a crack it made Bob Hope's "What really started the fire was that somebody rubbed two of Bing's sports coats together" sound like a quip off a very old block indeed.

Dave's remark relieved the tension, and we assumed a "so what, it was only a house" attitude. Two days later we moved into one of Marion Davies's houses—one she didn't happen to be using at the time.

I've been told that I'm relaxed and casual about episodes like this. If I am, I owe a lot of it to golf. Golf has provided the relaxation which has recharged my batteries when I put too heavy a load on them. In my opinion, competition on the links has removed more carbon knocks and emotional burrs from human minds than all the psychiatrists' couches. I'm a fanatic on the subject. Golf is a game which brings out the best in individuals and those who play it are ready and willing to channel their enthusiasm into paths which contribute to the public weal.

For the past seven years I've sponsored a golf tournament at Pebble Beach, California. I pay all expenses, and the entire proceeds go towards building recreation centres for youth in the area and for clinical needs of the community. In six years we've raised \$150,000.

Now that Hope and I have our honourable discharges from bond drives and Red Cross fund raising, golf seems an easy way to earn money



for such worthy causes. Our game is just good enough not to make real golfers ill, and our mis-cues and bungles are funny enough to give non-golfers a laugh. In September 1952 we played a match against two English opponents, Donald Peers and Ted Ray, at Maidenhead. The contest raised £7,600 for the English Playing Fields Fund.

After three or four holes the match turned into quite a big party. About ten thousand spectators planted themselves in front of us and when we asked them, "How about giving us a little elbow-room? We'd like to shoot down your way," they yelled: "We don't want you to shoot! We want to look at you!"

As we ducked under and round the crush, Hope and I essayed an occasional jocosity, but the most amusing remark of the day was made

by Ted Ray. At the sixth hole the gallery left us an alley only fifteen feet wide down which to drive. None of us was very expert and that sea of faces leaning over the ropes didn't make us feel more accurate. Ray addressed his ball and looked down the narrow lane of bodies. "Either stand back," he hollered, "or shut your mouths! I've had four balls swallowed today."

A London journalist, Charles Graves, wrote what seemed to me a funny story about our match. He treated it as if we were a party shooting grouse on the moors. Referring to the spectators, he wrote, "Hope got three. Crosby got a brace, but one of them was winged on the rise, which is a really sporting shot."

One of my favourite golfing yarns is the story of Lou Thomas, a fine putter, but a man so meticulous on the greens, so insistent on silence that playing with him was sometimes a trial. One day he had a twelve-footer to sink on the fourteenth green. Lou surveyed his putt from the upper and lower angles, tested the wind, spent five minutes reading the contours, the grass, even the roots. He picked up some loose blades of grass, some lint, tiny bits of sand, then turned to his caddy and asked, "Was this green cut this morning?"

"Yes," the caddy replied. Whereupon Lou putted and missed.

His opponent, who had spent this long interlude leaning on his putter with ill-concealed impatience, stepped up to his ball and stood over it for a moment wagging his club. Suddenly he stopped, straightened and turned to Lou's caddy.

"What time?" he inquired.

I DON'T see how I can tell my story without bringing in my passion for horse-flesh. I took an unmerciful ribbing about it for years from Hope on the radio. The ribbing has abated, but I still own a few horses, as I have ever since 1935.

Let me make it plain that, to me, a race track is for people who are reconciled to losing the kind of money they won't miss. If they win, good; they can buy dinner for their friends. But anybody who goes to the races thinking he'll make money steadily is kidding himself.

Over the years I've known hundreds of punters. Keen fellows, smart fellows, who know every angle round the race tracks. They have affluent periods, but most of the time they're flat broke. Only the knuckle-headed

believe that racing results can be consistently calculated with any degree of accuracy—even by “those in the know.” Hope calls a race track a horse-drawn vacuum cleaner. And then there’s the old truism: you can beat a race, but you can’t beat the races.

Interviewers have asked me, “What has been your most thrilling moment?” I didn’t think that their readers would get any lift out of my answer. For the truth is that I’ve found my most exciting moments in field-and-stream sports. I hope no one will think I’m boasting when I say I’ve done every kind of hunting there is to be done in this part of the world. I’ve hunted bear and moose, caribou, mountain sheep and goat, deer and elk in Canada. I’ve shot practically everything that flies.

I’ve fished the Cascapedia River for Atlantic salmon. I’ve fished in Puget Sound and on Vancouver Island for the tyee and the king salmon, and the colourful, fighting coho. I’ve fished off the coast of Mexico and every other place where rumour has reported the fishing good.

But my personal nomination for the greatest thrill of them all is to fish a good trout stream—a stream with plenty of room in which to throw a dry fly. When the conditions are right—the hatch is rising, the fly’s working perfectly—you cast upstream and your fly floats lightly down, and then you see a boil under the fly, a gleaming body in the sun, and your reel sings out. One such experience pays off for the longest and most arduous trip.

PROFESSIONALLY, the most satisfying experience in my career was my trip overseas to entertain the troops in England and France during the last war.

When we landed in England from a troopship we did a few transcriptions for the troops with Glenn Miller’s band at Air Force Command. Then we toured the English air bases and American installations.

After England, our troupe flew to Cherbourg. We landed there a month and a half after D day and worked our way up the peninsula, following our armed forces. At one point in my tour I worked from General Bradley’s headquarters. At the start of a day I’d get into a jeep and go round to the outposts, putting on little shows and talking to the boys.

Fred Astaire had given me two warnings. “Don’t sleep near a bridge, and when you’re out in a jeep, watch the telephone wires. When you

can't see them any more, you're in trouble." Since Fred had almost lost his life by not following the first of these warnings, I decided to pay them some heed.

When I came back to headquarters after my first day out, the officer in charge showed me to my quarters. They were very comfortable and I was just about to tell him how fine they were when I looked out of a window and saw—a bridge! I walked to the door and pointed to a lonely shack on a hill some distance away.

"That's where I'd like to sleep," I told him. "Is it possible?"

"Of course," he said, "but the facilities aren't what they are over here."

Luckily I had my way, for during the night the bridge and everything near it was blown up.

Another morning I set out in a jeep with a lieutenant. As the jeep rolled along the dusty road, I kept my eye on the telephone wires. We rode and rode and pretty soon the telephone wires were no more. I looked at the lieutenant, who didn't seem sure where he was going. Presently the patrols along the road began to look less friendly as they whizzed by. I glanced at the young officer and said, "I think we'd better turn round, don't you?"

The lieutenant agreed that we might be cruising around in No Man's Land, and we turned back real fast. That night after dinner, I was invited to General Bradley's quarters. The General stood behind his desk in front of a tremendous wall map of France.

"How did you do today?" he asked.

"Pretty good, General," I said. "We covered all the spots we intended to. We even got to the town of Sainte-Mère-Eglise."

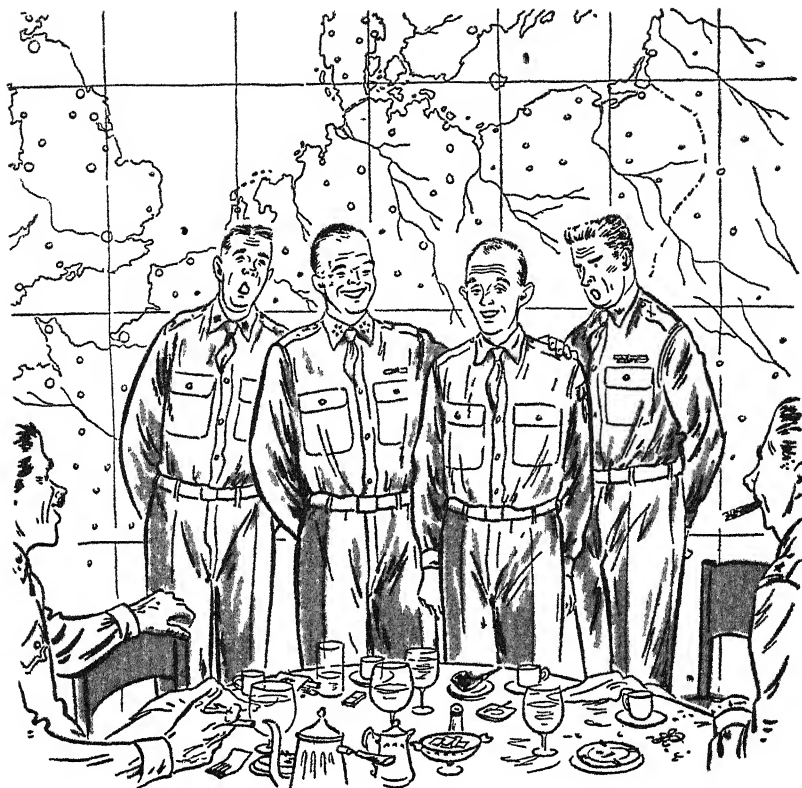
The general looked at the map, then turned to me quizzically. "Sainte-Mère-Eglise? We haven't taken that town yet!"

For a second my stomach felt as if it were making a non-stop trip from the top of the Eiffel Tower to the bottom. Then I pulled myself together and tried to give it the light touch.

"We had it for a little while this afternoon," I said.

Shortly before my tour was over, I found a memorandum in my hotel post-box which read: "Colonel Galt wants to see you." When I mentioned the message to a friend, he said, "Galt is one of Eisenhower's aides. Chances are the General wants to see you."

"I'd like to see him, too," I answered, "but I don't want him to think he



has to entertain every itinerant minstrel who happens to come along."

"If you do see him," my friend said, "and he asks if there's anything you want, why not see if he'll lend you a car for a couple of days?"

Cars were at a premium. The Métro had broken down and the French were all on bicycles. Colonels drove up to the Ritz in small cars, took out chains with links as big as horseshoes and giant locks and hitched their cars to lamp-posts before going in for lunch. I got in touch with Colonel Galt, and the upshot was that our troupe went out to Versailles and did some shows. Then we had luncheon with General Ike and his staff, and since he liked to sing in harmony, we got up a quartet. The General sang baritone.

When I was leaving, he asked, "Is there anything I can do for you?"

"You could let me have a car for a couple of days if you've got one handy," I said.

"Take my car and driver," he said.

"When do you want them back?" I asked him.

"When you've finished with them," he said.

That was on a Wednesday. The General got his car back on Saturday. Of course it had five stars painted on it, and I'm afraid that those five stars were parked in front of a few gay spots where the General wouldn't normally have been featured. When I returned the car, I asked, "Is there anything I can do for you when I get home?"

"Yes," he said, "you might send me some hominy grits. I can't seem to get any over here." When I returned to New York, I mentioned those grits—a coarse ground white corn—at a press conference. A month later I got a cablegram from Eisenhower. "Call off the grits," it said. "I've got grits spilling over all this area."

Kind-hearted ladies from the South had responded. Some of the grits were cooked, some were raw, some had sauce, some even had red gravy. I hate to think what they must have looked like and smelt like after days or weeks en route from Dixie to Versailles. I don't think Ike has eaten a grit since.

In 1947 or '48 the General was in Los Angeles. I got a call from him. He said, half in jest, "I don't want to see you—I've seen enough of you. But I would like to see those four boys of yours." So they went to his hotel and he spent an hour with them. To me this only proved what I already knew—this man has great humanness.

I've been abroad several times now. Every time I've been in England, which is three, I've had a royal time, and the friendliness of the English people is a very heart-warming thing to me.

With the exception of my own, however, France is my favourite country. I admire the individualism of the French, their unyielding opposition to any invasion of their personal rights or liberties. When we were shooting *Little Boy Lost* in Paris in the autumn of 1952, we had trouble in blocking off streets long enough to make the shots we needed. One day, after spending hours trying to shoo spectators away from the camera, we succeeded except one fellow. He stood his ground like Horatius at the bridge. "I was in the last war!" he declared proudly.

"I shall not move!" Nor did he. We had to pick another location.

The traffic in Paris is a highly confused operation, a sort of automotive poker game in which each driver tries to bluff the other. We were trying to get a shot near the Place de la Concorde when a two-car accident occurred. The driver who was in the right went up to a traffic policeman and I heard him ask for the arrest of the fellow who'd caused the accident.

"Please!" the traffic policeman said with dignity. "I direct traffic. I do not witness accidents."

That night I got into a traffic jam myself about seven o'clock and I asked my French driver where all the traffic policemen had gone. "At this time of the evening they go home in disgust," he said. "It becomes just too confusing."

My most hectic moment in Paris was the time I decided to take a nap on a patch of grass there. I'd had a big night. I'd been out with friends from New York, had had little sleep, and somehow it seemed noisy round the hotel that morning.

I wandered over to a small park called the Rond Point, near the Champs Elysées. I didn't know it but there was a sign there which said that it was forbidden to sit or lie down. I sat down for a while, started to read a paper and got sleepy. I put the newspaper over my face, lay back on the grass and tried to grab a little shut-eye.

It wasn't long before there was a rap on the soles of my feet and I started up to find a couple of Paris cops swishing their policemen's truncheons. I tried to tell them in pidgin French why I was there, but my story boiled down to the fact that I was tired. Of course that was no excuse. They took me by the arms and walked me down the street.

"Where are we going?" I asked.

"To the police station," they said.

I tried reasoning with them. "I'm an American singer," I said. "I'm over here on a vacation. What I did wouldn't hurt anyone and I'd like to clear this thing up before we get to the station house." They didn't know what American singer I was, and if they *had* known, it would have meant nothing to them.

I kept talking, but all the while we were walking down the street. By this time we had picked up quite a crowd.

Finally I pulled out a wallet which the Professional Golfers Association of America had given me for a job or two I'd done for them during

the war. It had a jewel on its front and under that was PGA in white enamel letters; and under that in small print was: "For Bing Crosby for his efforts on behalf of golf and on behalf of the Red Cross," or words to that effect.

"What does 'PGA' stand for?" the cops asked.

It was then that I had a flash of inspiration. "Police Garde Américaine," I said.

"You a policeman?" they said, raising their eyebrows. "We thought you said you are a singer?"

"I'm a singing policeman," I told them.

"How can a policeman afford a vacation in Paris?" they asked.

"Well, now," I said, "a policeman in America has many ways of making money which are not available to French policemen."

They looked very knowing at that. They said, "*Mais naturellement*," and added a sentence or two which seemed to indicate that they understood fully because "one saw that sort of thing all the time in the *cinéma américain*."

Since I was a fellow cop, they weakened a little. We stopped our progress stationward and were joined by another cop of higher rank. They told him the whole tale. He shook hands with me and although the name Bing Crosby meant nothing to him, he was glad to meet me because I was an American cop. He said, "You can go along now. But never again." "*Jamais encore*," I said fervently, "*non, jamais encore*."

CHAPTER 8

THE biggest mistake I've ever made with my boys was giving my eldest son, Gary, a car as a high school graduation present. Gary had eight years of grade school with the sisters and four years of high school with the Jesuit fathers. A considerable amount of restraint is a part of both these educational systems. They go in for supervised study at night, and no freedom except on Saturdays and Sundays—even then only until ten p.m. When Gary reached Stanford with a car at his beck and call, he fell apart. Like any other university, Stanford expects its students to be self-reliant and to face up to responsibilities. Sooner or later a fellow has to accept the restrictions of maturity, and he might as well start when he's a college freshman.

I didn't know how serious Gary's situation was until he came home at Thanksgiving and I heard him telling one of his pals how easy it was at Stanford; nobody cared whether you went to class or not, and everything was a cinch. That wasn't what I'd heard about Stanford. I began to worry, and after he went back to Palo Alto, I went up to talk to his professors—particularly to the Dean of Men—to find out what was going on.

The Dean said, "You won't have to worry about Gary, because he won't be here after Christmas."

"Where'll he be?" I asked.

"I don't know," the Dean said, "but he won't be here."

I got hold of Gary and had a talk with him. I pointed out the seriousness of the situation, took his car away from him and went home to talk to his mother. Quite naturally, Dixie was upset. "I think we ought to write him a strong letter," she said.

"You write him a letter," I suggested.

She did. She told him that if he was bounced by Stanford, we'd arrange for him to work digging ditches for the city when he came home. It was no empty threat. When it came to discipline, Dixie didn't fool, and Gary knew it. She added that she didn't think he'd have to dig ditches very long, for she was sure the Army would reach out and tag him shortly after he left Palo Alto. Her letter must have carried impact. He knuckled down, survived the weeding out of the lamer brains after Christmas, and made a really good showing in the spring quarter.

My situation as a father is maybe a bit more complicated than most. When the children of prominent show-business people go to school or to parties, the solid, well-grounded kids they meet pay them no special attention, but there's always a bunch of bubble-heads who make a fuss over them. "With all the money your old man's got, you'll never have to work," they tell them. Or, "You mean you've got only one car?" and they ladle out the old goo. If the kids who get this treatment are a little susceptible—as some of mine are—such guff can spoil them.

There's an old Italian proverb which says, "Never kiss a baby unless he's asleep." This should apply not only to babies but to teen-agers. I don't think kids can handle the "you're—so—wonderful" kind of praise. When I want to be especially flattering to one of my offspring, I say, "Nice goin'," and let it go at that.

It was easier to instil a sense of values into them before they began to grow up. One of the things I liked about my kids when they were younger was that they had fun standing outside our house at Pebble Beach making disparaging comments about it when strangers passed. They said, "Wouldn't you think Crosby would have a better house!" or "They say the guy who lives there is a terrible meany."

And they told me happily afterwards, "Some of the strangers who heard us looked very interested, Dad."

Some of my friends think I'm too tough a disciplinarian with my sons. I'm particularly well known for this at Hayden Lake, in Idaho, where I take my four boys each August when they've finished working on our ranch in Elko, Nevada. When the twins, Dennis and Philip, were seventeen and Gary was eighteen, I set up a few rules to govern their checking-in hours. The twins had to be in by ten o'clock at night and Gary had to show up by eleven. Those rules held good every night unless there was a party or a dance for young people at a neighbour's home with the parents present. In that case, they could stay out as long as the party lasted or as long as the parents were on deck.

Not everyone else at Hayden—meaning parents—agreed with my kind of regulation. Nor does this apply to Hayden Lake alone. It's true in Beverly Hills. As a result, I've had some bitter arguments with my sons. They've come home at ten o'clock wearing a lip on them that would trip a pig, disgruntled at having to leave while the fun was still going on and fifteen- and fourteen-year-olds were staying up. But it's my claim that no kid that young has any business out after ten o'clock, fooling around in a car or laughing it up in beer parlours. Any dad who expects a group of seventeen- or eighteen-year-olds to wander around loose as ashes at two or three o'clock in the morning and not get into mischief once in a while is leading with his soft head. I've tried teen-age psychology by reminding my sons that a manager of a big-league ball club like the Pittsburgh Pirates insists on curfew regulations, too.

But my athletes-should-be-in-early-at-night doge doesn't seem to go over so big. Looking squint-eyed at their activities has made me quite a heavy, not only with my own boys but with other people's kids. My sons tell me I'm considered the big bad wolf at Hayden Lake; that the other kids run when I come round.

This has put me squarely in the middle. There have been times when



I couldn't tell whether I was Captain Bligh in a Hawaiian sports shirt or the cream puff of the world, for Dixie used to tell me that I was too lax. She used to reproach me with, "You punish them; then ten minutes later you're taking them to a movie. That's bad. You should let the memory of their punishment linger so they'll remember it."

Lax or not, I'll bet they remember the spankings they got when they were younger. I laid in a big leather belt, similar to the one I'd backed up to at Gonzaga, and when they did something particularly outrageous—for example, giving Dixie's canary what they called "a summer suit" by plucking its feathers—I summer-suited them by taking their trousers down and fanning their rears.

But I admit I haven't licked them for several years. They've grown too big, and I don't duck too well any more. I could outshuffle Lin, but Gary and the twins carry too much thunder. So when punishment is indicated, I take their liberties away from them. If the infraction is a minor one, I lock up the TV set for a week, or ban the movies, or call off baseball games. If it's big, I ground them for a fortnight. No nothin'. Coventry!

Dixie used to say that I didn't make our children observe the social graces and that I didn't make them dress properly. I failed her in these matters because I don't know enough about them myself to notice the violations.

I recall once when Gary was about fourteen, Dixie and I were up at Pebble Beach with him. We were asked to a formal dinner party. When I mentioned that Gary was with us the host said, "Bring him, too." So I let him use one of my black bow ties and fixed up a double-breasted blue for him and along he went.

Dinner went smoothly enough and when the dessert was finished, the ladies, as is the custom, rose to go into the drawing-room, leaving the men to their brandy and cigars. Gary watched this feminine exodus wonderingly and then, turning to me, asked, "What's the matter? Did somebody say something out of line?"

At another such party, when the butler asked son Denny if he'd like white wine or burgundy, Denny broke up the place by saying, "Hit me with a little burgey."

When we had company and Dixie saw the boys sitting about in slacks, sweaters and moccasins, she slowly grew angry. They looked good to

me, garbed in that fashion, because that's the way I dress myself. There's no blinking the fact that I'm famous—perhaps "notorious" would be a better word—for the casualness of my clothing. My clothes ought to be good. They cost enough. But I don't blend them well. Could be that some of my weird combinations are due to my colour blindness. My sons have a lot of fun with this visual failing of mine. It delights them if they can trap me into some cock-eyed colour combination. They've gone so far as to lay out a grey sock and a blue sock for me in the morning, and I've put them on without noticing the difference.

When the boys were small, there were always so many arguments during their soft-ball games about who was out or safe or whose turn it was to bat and one thing or another, that we finally established a rule: anyone who became unmanageable or beefed too much would have to go and sit in a dark corner on the porch with his back to the game until he'd served his time.

One afternoon, I remember, we were having a big game in which comedian Phil Silvers was playing. He's a great baseball fan and rather fancies himself as a player. I was called into the house for a long-distance telephone call. I was gone quite a while and when I came out the four younger Crosbys had Phil sitting in a dark corner on the porch. The game was going merrily on without him. He emerged from that experience a thoroughly chastened man.

None of the three other boys have such combustible tempers as Gary. Denny's easy-going. Everything rolls off his back without ruffling his feathers. He's an average student, but there are times, when it comes to ordinary, everyday matters, that he seems pretty vague about the score. I don't think he'll mind my telling this one on him. The band leader, Horace Heidt, once gave me a clock, and I said to Denny, "This is a four-hundred-day clock. It'll run for four hundred days without winding."

"Almost a year, hey," Denny replied. Freshman in college, too.

However, I mustn't let Denny bear all the burden as our principal bone-head. In reality, he's just as clever as the others only he doesn't spend too much time thinking. Linny, though he gets good marks at school, pulled one that ought to qualify him for passing comment. I used to hold a small seminar at the dinner table. When the boys started talking too much about athletics and other unimportant subjects, I'd quiz them on history or current events, or music, or any other subject

I thought they ought to know about. When I asked Linny to tell me where the surrender of Robert E. Lee to General Grant took place, he thought a moment, then said, "Approximate Court House," instead of Appomattox Court House!

I found it a little difficult to grade his answer.

Another of my favourite memories of Linny involves some preliminary footage about a Hollywood director who's a bigger ham than any actor I've ever known. He owns the traditional wardrobe: the camel-hair coat, white, buttoned, pleated and belted; the spats; the cane; the soft grey hat turned down on one side à la Jimmy Walker. When he calls "Camera" or "Cut," his delivery is dramatic in the extreme. He's a frustrated actor if I've ever seen one, endowed with a full portion of well-smoked Smithfield characteristics.

One evening a fellow director who occupied studio space next to his noticed a gaunt shadow stalking to and fro in the dusk behind the building. Investigating, he discovered that the shadow was the ham-bone director.

"What's the trouble?" he asked the stalker.

"My dear David, haven't you heard?" the Hamlet of the megaphone asked in sepulchral tones.

"No," David replied.

"It's my wife! She underwent surgery today."

"How's she feeling?" David asked anxiously.

The hammy one held out a hand, palm down, thumb extended, and wavered it like an aeroplane signalling with its wings. "Hovering," he said dramatically, "just hovering." Then he added, "By the way, do you have an extra seat for the fight tonight?"

I told this story round the house, and my boys got quite a kick out of it. A year or two went by and I forgot about it.

In the summer of 1946, when we were at our ranch in Elko County, Lindsay, who was about nipe, went down with a mysterious attack of fever. Twenty-four hours passed and he showed no improvement. In fact, his temperature rose, so I had a bush pilot who operates from Elko, fly Dr. Les Morin out. When the doctor examined Linny, his diagnosis confirmed the suspicions which were already lurking in my mind. He had Rocky Mountain spotted fever, induced by a tick bite.

His fever increased and he became delirious. The doctor advised

against moving him to a hospital, but he promised to fly out twice a day to care for him. For several days and nights the fever raged. During all that time Linny was unconscious. On the fifth day, in the small hours of the morning, he broke into a drenching sweat and his temperature fell. For a while he dozed, then he opened his eyes and looked inquiringly round the room.

"How do you feel, Lin?" I asked anxiously.

He grinned feebly and stuck his hand out, palm down, thumb extended, wavered it from side to side, and said in a quavering voice, "Hovering. Just hovering."

SOME years ago Dixie and I set up a trust fund for our boys as an irrevocable gift. Jack O'Melveny is the administrator of that fund.

When the boys appear on radio shows with me they're paid the same amount as any other guest of comparable drawing power. My sons never see these cheques. They go directly into the trust fund. I don't suppose that it's reasonable to expect a youngster to appreciate money that's handed to him without his doing much of anything to earn it. I've noticed that the only money my sons take care of is the money they earn at our ranch for the six or seven weeks' work they do each summer. They are paid just what the other ranch employees get per day.

It should be obvious that my reason for buying the ranch in Elko and a summer home at Hayden Lake, Idaho, had to do with a search for seclusion and remoteness. I wanted my family to have a chance to lead a normal life away from the limelight which is inescapably their portion.

But, despite our remoteness, I get all kinds of drop-ins. For instance, an utter stranger arrived one summer at Hayden Lake with his family in a travel-stained car. He had written some songs and, feeling that the words and music which had "come right out of his head" were sure hits if I would sing them over the air, he'd sold his successful ice-cream business to pay for the trip to Idaho.

I listened to his portfolio of songs, but they had no chance of becoming hits or even being published. I broke the news to him as gently as I knew how, but having to tell him depressed me for several days.

There are other hopeful folk who call me on the phone wherever I happen to be to sing me a song they've written. How they find out my whereabouts beats me. Some of them have written words for which they

want me to write the melody. I was staying in a San Francisco hotel when a woman reached me on the phone and sang me a song. When she'd finished I said, "Leave a copy of it at the desk. I'll take a look at it and send you my reaction."

"What desk?" she asked.

"The desk downstairs," I said.

There was a long pause. Then she said, "But I'm in Baltimore."

CHAPTER 9

ELKO COUNTY has done a lot for me, and it's done more for my sons, but looking at the proposition more cold-bloodedly, it's the best investment I ever made. I've been able to improve the ranch to a point where there's none finer in the county for its size. Its extent is considerable, but it's not a vast place, because much of its acreage is unusable. It's a functioning cow-and-calf operation with nothing phoney about it.

We get very deep snow up there. When Dixie and I left the house in wintertime to visit a neighbour, even if he lived only five or six miles away, we were cautioned to phone as soon as we arrived and let our people know we'd arrived. If they didn't hear from us within an hour or two, they'd send out an expedition to dig us out.

Once, when Dixie and I were ready to leave, it took us all day with a bulldozer to open a road from the ranch buildings to the main highway, three or four miles away. Then we went to bed, but in the morning, when we got up, we couldn't find the road. It had all drifted over again. I had a broadcast to do in San Francisco, and I barely made it.

Amusing things happen up there on our party line. One day Mrs. Eacret asked Johnny Eacret to get some soap flakes in Elko and he called her from Elko and told her that her favourite store didn't have soap flakes. A strange voice interposed to say, "Try the A. & P." Things get pretty lonely on the far-flung ranches and it's not unusual for some of the cooks or the ladies of the house to listen in for a few hours. I've heard them say it's better than soap opera. "More real like. Besides, our radio reception is very poor."

I don't begrudge them any entertainment they get out of my calls. They must hear some very broadening conversation when some of my uninhibited companions call me long-distance.

The Elko ranch and our home at Hayden Lake are oases of enjoyment in a hurly-burly world. Dixie knew that, during the rest of the year, our sons plan and dream of nothing except their vacation at Hayden Lake, and in August 1952, even though she was desperately ill, she insisted that we go up there without her. When I consulted her doctors about this, they told me, "If you don't go, she'll fret because you're hanging about here, and she'll feel worse. The best thing for you to do is go."

That's why I went.

It's also why I went to Paris in 1952 to make *Little Boy Lost*. She demanded that I go, and once more her doctor said, "You'd better do it. Every day you're here, she'll think you're staying because of her and it'll make her uncomfortable."

I hope to keep this section about Dixie simple, honest, and straightforward. That was the way she was herself. Any mawkish sentimentality about her would have made her wince. She would have had more than one salty comment about it if I'd slobbered over about her while she was still around to hear it.

Dixie never wanted me to do anything because of her that interfered with my work. And it worked both ways. I never asked anything of her that she didn't want to do. As long as it was right, fair and honest, we did what we pleased. When I went anywhere, it was because she wanted me to go. It was the same with her. If she wanted to go anywhere, she packed up and went. We married because we fell in love, and we refused to let a family and homes turn our love into a cage. We never had any real arguments about the time I spent away from home. She knew that since I was in show business I had to go lots of places other men don't go—unless they happen to be soldiers or sailors or travelling salesmen. That seemed difficult—if not impossible—for many people to understand.

When I've had to be abroad or on tour, working, I've got letters, most of them anonymous, from people taking me to task because I didn't spend more time with Dixie. They pictured her as lonely and forgotten. That was not true.

Dixie had a host of friends and she never lost one of them, although some of her attachments went back twenty-five years. She remembered the birthdays of scores of them and sent them gifts. It was a year-round

job for her. Christmas was an even bigger production. In October she took over a whole room, stocked it with a table and rolls of wrapping paper, tinsel, holly, cards and paste, and set up Operation Xmas.

She not only shopped endlessly herself, she pressed her friends and her secretary into service as shoppers. Her gift-wrapping went on from nine in the morning until dinner-time. A week or two before Christmas the Crosbys went into the local delivery business. I've never seen packages wrapped the way she wrapped them. With the colours she employed, the silver balls, the holly and the other ornaments, they were things of beauty. It was a shame to open them. For our Christmas at home she insisted on a huge tree. Sometimes it was touch and go whether she'd lop off a few feet or call for the wreckers to cut a hole in our roof.

Our house was a singing house during the holidays. Although the boys are getting big for it now, we used to go out—the five of us—singing Christmas carols round the neighbourhood.

I miss Dixie especially at Christmas time. She was shy, but she wasn't shy as far as her sons were concerned, nor was she diffident with me. We had our spats—as who doesn't over a span of twenty-odd years?—but they were never anything serious. I can't recall that we ever had any real down-to-the-mat arguments that ended with one of us stalking out.

The last special family reunion we had was Dixie's surprise birthday party for me in 1952. It was less than two months later that Dixie was so desperately ill that she required the surgery from which she never rallied.

No one could give a party with a more elegant touch than Dixie. The invitations read:



*You are cordially invited to attend
A Surprise
Birthday Dinner
for
Bing Crosby
On Friday evening, May 2, 1952
BLACK TIE
(That'll surprise him!)*

For days before the event, as soon as I left for the studio each morning, Dixie proceeded with her secret plans. She made sure that all the people I especially liked would be on hand. She consulted with her beloved "Aunt Mary," the coloured caterer who knew exactly how to carry out the plans for Dixie's parties. And she made all the arrangements for Gary, Phil and Denny to fly down from their respective schools on Friday, May 2, so that they could arrive home without my knowing it, just in time to don their black ties for the big celebration.

When I left for the studio that morning, all was as usual. Linny was getting ready for school, Dixie was at breakfast, the rest of the household bustling about their usual tasks.

When I got home at seven that evening, the Crosby manse had been transformed into a tropical garden. A great marquee stretched from the back patio to the far end of the lawn. Palm trees had been temporarily planted round the patio, which had been made into a huge dance floor. At the far end of the garden was a bandstand with Les Brown and full orchestra aboard, playing "Happy Birthday to You." This was the sight that greeted me, with about a hundred and seventy-five guests who had come to wish me well. As Dixie came up to me and put her arms round me, I am not ashamed to admit that my eyes were swimming.

I don't plan to talk about my grief at losing her. I believe that grief is the most private emotion a human being can have, and I'm going to keep mine that way. But in the years that lie ahead I'm going to sorely miss her love and her steadfast support. She was the most completely honest person I've ever known, and as the last events in her life demonstrated, one of the most courageous. Two weeks before her death, she took daily transfusions to build up her strength so that she could come to the station and meet the train which brought me home. And she was

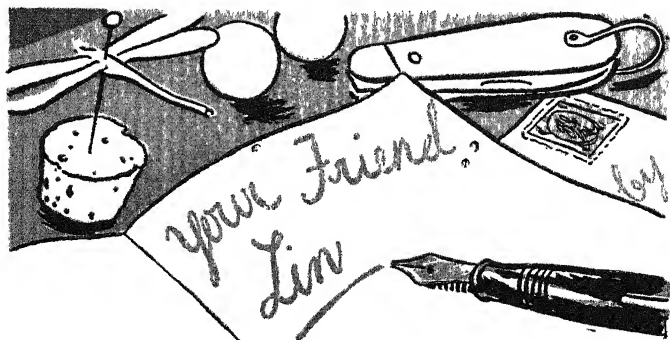
there, just as she'd always been: beautifully dressed, gay and smiling. I don't ever want anything more in life than the memory of all she did for me.

I DON'T claim I'm any prize as a parent. I know I overlook things I should take care of. In the past ten or twelve years, both during and after the war, I've been on the road a lot. I'm tired when I get home from the studio at night, and there are things I should do about my kids' discipline and studies that I've let slide. But I try. Dixie tried, too. Maybe we've had the wrong approach, but we've done the best we could.

One thing I know; I'm going to keep yipping at my little scoundrels until they're twenty-one, and I'm going to demand that they have a goal in life, a purpose. The most tragic spectacle I can think of is that of a young man slipping aimlessly through school, then life, secure in the belief that affluence means happiness. I'm not going to let up on them. Dixie didn't. She felt the same way I do about that. It's not easy. It makes me feel like a heel to be jumping on them all the time, and the endless pleading, the coaxing and bawling out grow tiresome. But when I grow discouraged, I like to remember the letter my youngest son, Linny, wrote to me when he was nine or ten and I was back East.

In his letter he gave me a detailed account of the sporting news from the Pacific Coast. I forget whether football or baseball was in season, but I remember he closed: "Your *friend*, Lin." That made me feel happier than any actor over a rave notice.

Father *and* friend.



Bing Crosby



BING CROSBY is one of the few Americans who have lived to see themselves become a legend. His name is known on every continent, and his voice has been listened to by more people, perhaps, than any other voice in history.

Call Me Lucky is the result of a monumental amount of work by Crosby—a man who often claims that he does very little work at all—and his collaborator, Pete Martin. For months he spent every spare moment with a dictaphone, as his memory took him over his entire past. Then Martin edited and revised to produce a book which, like a Crosby film, seems deceptively easy and offhand.

Pete Martin is one of the most widely known magazine writers in America. He has been on the staff of *The Saturday Evening Post* since 1925, and once set a record of thirty articles in its pages in a single year.



THE GREEN HELMET



Illustrations by Frank Wootton

THE GREEN HELMET

A condensation of the book by

JON CLEARY



"The Green Helmet" is published by Collins, London

THE DAREDEVILS who drive in such world-famous motor-races as the Le Mans Grand Prix live by a creed of courage and skill, and their gleaming powerful cars are extensions of themselves. For Ham Rafferty, whose green helmet distinguishes him as an English driver, racing is more than a sport—it is life itself.

What is left, then, for such a man when reason says the time has come to stop? Ham's mother, herself widowed by the cars, can understand his problem. The American girl, Sophie, cannot.

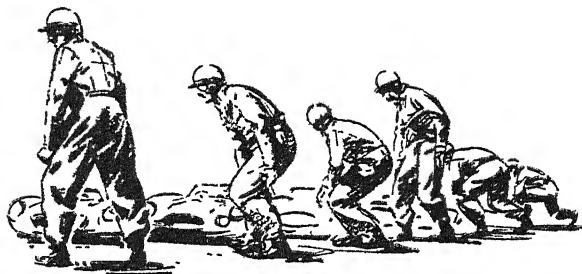
This gripping story of the men who drive and the women who wait at the finish line comes to its exciting climax with the Mille Miglia, the thousand-mile road-race that every racing driver longs to win.

"The description of top-class road-racing makes this an outstanding novel. The author has the gift of putting you right into the seat beside the driver. . . ."

—Joseph Taggart in *The Star*

"A novel for all who thrill to razor-edge excitement."

—*The Manchester Evening News*



CHAPTER 1

THE CAR, anonymous in the pre-dawn darkness, its colour dawn-grey like that of all the other cars, hit an oil slick as it came through the S-bends in the Le Mans race-course.

Its driver fought the skid as the car hurtled down towards Tertre-Rouge Corner, the car's headlights slashing a berserk pattern across the track ahead of it. For one moment it seemed that the driver had won the battle; then the car slewed suddenly and hit the picket fence. It seemed to rebound, as if the fence had been of concrete, then abruptly it halted right across the middle of the track.

Almost instantly, back at the pits, a yellow light began to flash a warning to the other cars coming up the straight at full speed. The race slowed, and the cars went cautiously through the S-bends and past the wrecked car. A minute later the wreck, a blue French Gordini, had been pushed from the track.

In the stands a thin, elderly man turned as the girl beside him, wrapped in a rug, sat up and stretched. "Another one out. That's seventeen gone now. Did you sleep?"

The girl began to arrange her black hair. "I slept, I guess. But it was like being out there in the middle of the track." Sophie Bartell smiled

at her father. "I don't know how you could sit there all night and not get a headache from the noise."

Bartell tapped his pocket and smiled. "I turned off my hearing-aid. Best comfort yet invented for watching motor-racing. Better even than a soft pillow for a bony tail—sorry, girl!" The long, thin face seemed to crumble with embarrassment. "That's the way we talk around the plant. I keep forgetting I'm not there now."

"You've spent too long around the plant," Sophie said.

"Your mother said that, too," said Bartell, and Sophie knew that she had hurt him. She put her hand on his. "I'm sorry, Dad," she said. "I didn't mean it like that."

"I know, girl," he said, and he pressed her fingers, the first physical sign of affection that had passed between them in four years. Sophie wanted to lean forward and kiss him, but she restrained the impulse. She broke the moment as gently as she could. "Wouldn't you like to go down to one of the restaurants and have a good breakfast?"

"I—well, not just yet awhile. Do you mind? Ham Rafferty should be coming out again, and it looks as if it might rain soon. I want to see what he's like in the wet."

"It's dangerous when it's wet, isn't it?"

"Could be. Depends on the driver. Depends, too, on the tyres he's got under him."

Sophie looked at Bartell and felt the same quiver of fear she had known as a youngster when she had begun to realize that there was a part of her father that she could not understand. It was in those years that her father had become dedicated to his plant, when he had begun to forget about being a husband and father. "When are you speaking to Rafferty?"

"When this race is over," Bartell said. "He's the man I want—a driver who's been racing long enough now not to be reckless but who'll still take a risk if the money is big enough."

"Is he the sort of man who's interested in money?"

"All the pros are interested in money," said Bartell. "Rafferty is a pro, and so was his old man."

"Was Rafferty's father good, too?"

"One of the best ever. He was killed in the great Italian road-race, the Mille Miglia, in 1947. Rafferty was right on his tail and saw him go off the road."

"And Rafferty has gone on racing, even after seeing his father die like that? He *must* be interested in money." Sophie stood up. "I think I'll go and try for some breakfast," she said, and then tried to make her tone as gentle as possible. "You stay and watch your Mr. Rafferty."

She made her way out of the row of seats and went down behind the stands. As she walked she was aware of the cars screaming by on her left. The air was heavy with the acrid smell of oil and fuel and rubber; would rain, she wondered, do something to clear the air?

Her head ached from the broken sleep she had had and the constant noise of the cars that now seemed, she thought, to be drilling away at her very sanity. She wondered how the drivers could endure this din for twenty-four hours. She had never seen a motor-racing meet before. At the start she had caught the infectious excitement of the crowd and for the first hour or two her interest had been as enthusiastic as that of her father. Then gradually she had become bored by it all and now, with the twenty-four-hour race still only half over, she was downright sick of it.

Yesterday afternoon at four o'clock, the sudden hush that fell over a quarter of a million spectators had become something almost tangible; the Le Mans Grand Prix d'Endurance was about to begin. Sixty sports cars had been lined up at an angle to the road, in front of the pits. The cars—British, green; French, blue; Italian, red; German, white; Dutch, orange; Belgian, yellow; the white and blue of the Americans; the blue and yellow of the two Argentinians; the red and white of the Swiss—dazzled like a metallic rainbow. Across the road from the cars had been their drivers, each standing in a small numbered circle. A loud-speaker, nasally French, had been counting off the minutes. Then the flag had fallen, there had been a loud gasp from the crowds in the grandstands, and the drivers had hurled themselves across the track and into their cars. A moment later the first car, its tyres screaming at the sudden torture, its engine moaning, then rising to an angry whine, had been away; the rest of the field followed at once, weaving itself into a many-coloured pattern that was to turn itself into a long twisting streamer from which odd snippets would occasionally fall away, sometimes dramatically and suddenly. Now, twelve hours later, the huge crowd was beginning to stir, coming awake like a giant animal thirsting for excitement and, perhaps, hoping for blood.

Not all the crowd had been asleep. Behind the six grandstands, the

coffee shops and bars were doing good business. Opposite the track was the area known as Le Village. Here rows of display kiosks were manned by red-eyed, crow-throated salesmen: would monsieur like a new car, an electric lawn mower, an engagement ring for the girl he had just met? In another area was the carnival: circuses, music halls, shooting galleries, snake charmers, freaks. Girls stood on platforms smiling through cracked make-up at the suckers in the crowd.

Dawn began to break through low-hanging clouds. From the grandstands one could only guess at what was going on along the rest of the course, from the Dunlop bridge right round to White House corner, six miles of track where anything could happen. From down on the Mulsanne straight came the whining tornado of cars accelerating to top speed; the chain lightning of their headlights flickered through the trees. The higher-powered cars were doing a hundred and eighty miles an hour; on each side of the road dark pines stood like disapproving peasants halted on their way to early Mass. Tyres squealed, engines roared, and the awakening crowd stretched and found the taste of excitement still there in their dry sleep-lined mouths.

Sophie crossed the footbridge and walked down behind the pits, where no one had slept at all except the relief drivers trying to shut their ears to the din only yards from their stretchers. She was hungry and thirsty, but all at once she had a compelling desire to see at close range some of the racing drivers, particularly Ham Rafferty. She recognized him from his photographs when she was still twenty or thirty yards from him. He was talking to a grey-haired woman and a younger, slimmer man who looked as if he could be his brother. A spot of rain fell, then another, and Rafferty looked up. With the light from the pits striking slantwise across his features, his face had a hard look: he looked a man suited to his profession, one where death was part of the wages. Then he looked down at the grey-haired woman and smiled, and his face seemed to soften.

A moment later the woman and the younger man turned away from Rafferty and came past Sophie. "We must get some tea," the woman said. "I can never begin my day until I've had my tea."

Sophie knew at once that this must be Ham Rafferty's mother, and she wondered how a mother could go off for a cup of tea so casually, while her son was drawing on his helmet and getting ready to race. She looked back at the pits, but Rafferty had already turned away and was

talking to a short, plump, bald-headed mechanic. He looked relaxed, a little bored and almost too sure of himself.

She turned away and began to walk back towards the footbridge. She did not like motor-racing. She had already had enough of the sport to last her a lifetime. Yet she knew that, if her father asked her to go with him to a motor-race every day of their stay in Europe, she would have to go with him. She was starting her life all over again.

THE GREY-HAIRED woman had been coming to Le Mans every year the race had been held since its first meeting in 1923. "I don't like the look of that sky. It looks like rain," she said.

Taz Rafferty patted his mother's hand. "Don't worry. Ham can handle a wet track. He's got it down to a fine art."

Janet Rafferty nodded and tried not to let her worry show on her good-humoured, unlined face. She had been a beautiful young girl, and the beauty was still there. "I know. But rain is like—well, a memory. I can't forget what it did to your father."

Each year at Le Mans and in the various Grands Prix, at Monza, Monaco, wherever they were held, it was always like this when Ham drove; their mother could take the shorter races on the British tracks, the bread-and-butter events, but the longer races always taxed to the limit her capacity for self-control. But even though he knew what it cost their mother each time, Taz was already dreaming of the day when he, too, would drive in the Grands Prix.

"I'm going to six o'clock Mass," Janet said, as she drank her tea. "Are you coming?"

"I'll go later," Taz said. "Ham's due out again soon."

"I'd better hurry, or I'll be late for Mass," Janet said.

"It's begun to drizzle," said Taz. "Did you bring an umbrella?"

"Of course," said Janet, and Taz helped her from the table.

Taz watched his mother walk away through the drizzle that was now turning to steady rain. He loved her and never wanted her to be hurt again as she had been when his father had been killed; and yet lately he had begun almost to resent her for the promise she had extracted from him five years ago, when he had been only sixteen: that he would not try to become a Grand Prix driver while his brother was still racing. Taz had begun to resent Ham too.



He turned up the collar of his jacket and stepped out into the rain. He walked round in front of the stands and stood staring at the track. He saw the works car that his brother drove flash by with the co-driver at the wheel. Two more laps, and then Ham would take over the car, and drive it in the race that Taz ached to drive in some day.

THE MOMENT he was out in the middle of the track Ham Rafferty knew that it was a long time since he had driven through rain like this.

Even before he had reached the end of the pits his goggles were smeared with water; a silver Mercedes, hurling spray, went past him while he was still gathering speed, and it was like driving into a waterfall. He drove under the Dunlop bridge almost by instinct; when he could see properly again he was coming down into the S-bends. He changed down to second, keeping his tail right for each section of the bend, then he was out of them, changing up to third, then swiftly down again as he came into Tertre-Rouge.

This was a tricky corner even in dry conditions. Because of the arched surface of the road you had to take the corner later than seemed wise. The lift of the car's tail over the hump of the road as it joined the main road to Tours could spin him into the protecting sandbank beyond. He judged the moment carefully, holding his line, feeling the adhesion beneath him, then he was through and the corner was behind him. Ahead was a fast four-mile stretch.

He went up through the gears, confident now, and began to overhaul three smaller cars ahead of him. At a hundred and seventy he went past a Panhard crawling along at a hundred and five, and a moment later, like a horizontal water-spout, whooshed by an M.G. and an Osca. At this speed the rain was being deflected over his head by the pressure of the car as it swept through it; his goggles were clear but the road ahead was still lost in the thick fog of rain. But this was his seventh Le Mans and he knew the road as well as he knew the instrument panel in front of him. He had driven round the course innumerable times in practice; in the six races he had completed he had done more than one thousand two

hundred laps. He knew this sometimes grey, sometimes blue, sometimes black road better than he knew any road in the whole of the British Isles. All he had to worry about was the possibility of wrecks across the track; but if you thought about such things, you would never drive. So you didn't think about them; when they suddenly appeared in front of you you left it to your reflexes to get you out of trouble.

He saw the hump in the road ahead and immediately began to slow. As he came over the hump he saw the right-angled bend of Mulsanne four hundred metres down the road. He began to brake, changing down opposite the 300-, 200- and 100-metre signs that marked the right-hand side of the road like numbered tombstones, and went into the bend in bottom gear. Out of the corner of his eye he saw a car coming back up the road that led to Tours; its driver must have come down to the corner too fast and, rather than risk going into the sandbank, had taken the safer if less spectacular way of the escape road. In the 1952 race Ham had gone that way himself and been glad of it. Only fools and men who didn't live long sneered at escape roads.

He accelerated, changing swiftly up, and went over the next rise at close to a hundred and fifty. The road curved right and he began to slow as he came down into the corner called Indianapolis. He went through the first bend in third at eighty and changed down to take the next bend in second. Then he was into another right-angled bend, this time Arnage. A car had gone into the sandbank here and its driver was furiously digging it out. Ham came out of Arnage in low gear and on acceleration passed four cars whose drivers didn't trust the slippery surface. He went over the brow of the hill half-way between the 11- and 12-kilometre stones at close to a hundred and twenty and went down towards White House corner. This was the worst corner of all, the part of the track with the highest record of casualties. There had been some famous smashes here; twice there had been pile-ups involving no less than six cars.

Ham went into the corner in third at about a hundred and ten. The rain seemed suddenly to thicken as he was half-way through the bend; it whipped his face and slashed across his goggles; he drove blind but kept his wheels on the line he had chosen. He came out of the bend and the blinding rain, pleased with the way he had driven through it.

Then there was the red car right across the track in front of him.

Reflexes, developed through experience, took control. He saw the gap between the car and the outside of the road and aimed the green car towards it. He went through with inches to spare, the red car suddenly bursting into flame right beside him and then he found himself heading for the bank. He twisted the wheel round, got back on the road; then he felt the rear wheels going from beneath him in a wild sliding skid. He careered up the road, working desperately on the wheel, fighting the car and yet coaxing it at the same time, but the road had turned to glass beneath him and the tyres were oiled silk. He saw the bank loom up ahead of him, saw people running away in terror, saw the grey implacable sky as the car hurtled up towards it, felt the daggers of rain against his face, then everything had spun away from him, the ground was rushing up to meet him, and a moment later he saw and felt nothing.

Up the road at the pits the flags came out and the yellow light began to blink its warning.

CHAPTER 2

THE BLUE Jensen sports car came slowly into the forecourt of the Dorchester Hotel. Over in Hyde Park the trees had begun to droop, like great green balloons from which the summer air was leaking. September had come and another year had begun to die.

Ham Rafferty backed the Jensen into a space between a shining black Rolls-Royce and a yellow Cadillac with diplomatic-corps plates. A doorman hurried across the court, leaning into the wind so that his top hat wouldn't be whisked away. Ham looked at the tall man and wondered if London hotels dressed their doormen for the benefit of American tourists. He had by now become unconscious of the fact that he himself was given to eccentricity in his dress.

He wore a yellow bow tie, a green check shirt, a tan waistcoat with brass buttons, a large-check green sports jacket, tan twill trousers, yellow suède boots and a brown-and-white check cap. Directly after the war, when he had first started racing, the effort to be conspicuous had been deliberate. He had set about establishing his own reputation and personality as something more than his famous father's son. By the time of his father's death, people had begun to take his eccentricity for granted and it had become habit for him.

Ham got out of the car, reached in for his stick, then limped into the hotel to the desk. He got the number of Mr. Bartell's suite, then went across to the lift. At the door of the suite he knocked and stood waiting. He was looking forward to meeting Mr. Joseph Bartell, if only out of curiosity.

He took off his cap and ran a hand over his thick, dark hair. A woman went by, and he was aware of her furtive scrutiny; he grinned to himself. He was not vain about his attraction for women; it was something he took for granted, just like his skill in driving.

He was a big man, some said too big for a racing driver. Before his accident at Le Mans he had been in perfect condition. Now, after six weeks in hospital and the ensuing convalescence, there was a little fat on him round the middle. His face was handsome only to those who admired strength; it was too broad for those who looked for the æsthetic. There was a hardness in the features, the hooked nose, the big, determined mouth, the strong chin; but the dark-blue eyes under the thick black brows had a balancing hint of humour and kindness. A Milan newspaper had once featured a cartoon of him and christened him *L'Aquila*, the eagle; the name had stuck to him on all the European circuits.

The door was opened by a girl. Even against the light of the big windows behind her, Ham could see that she was attractive. He had heard that American executives always went in for attractive secretaries.

"Won't you come in, Mr. Rafferty?" She stood aside, so that the light from the window was now full on her. He saw now that she was downright beautiful. "I am Sophie Bartell. My father telephoned to say he has been delayed. He asked me to look after you."

He looked carefully at her, trying not to stare. He had seen plenty of American women and known a few. He had felt that they had all come from one mould: their individuality had been lost in the pages of the glossy magazines they bought and studied. But Sophie Bartell came from no common mould. "He expects to be only ten minutes or so," she said. "Would you care for a drink?"

"Yes. A beer, if you have one. Do you drink beer?"

"Occasionally," she said. "I like your English beer when it is iced. Usually, though, they serve it lukewarm."

"It's the sensitive English stomach. It needs coddling."

"Have you a sensitive stomach?"

"No," he said and returned her smile: at least American women were always easy to become friendly with. "I'll take it iced."

"We'll sit over there by the window." She poured the drinks and followed him across the room. "Is your walking-stick a legacy from your accident at Le Mans?"

"Yes. How did you know about that?"

"I was there. I didn't see you go off the track, but I saw the ambulance bringing you in. A lot of people thought you were dead."

"So did I," he said and tasted his beer. "I would have been if a couple of spectators hadn't dragged me out of the car just as it caught fire."

"Were you burnt at all?"

"Just down my left arm."

"Badly?" Then she flushed and made a quick little gesture with her hand. "I'm sorry. You mustn't want to talk about it."

"It's all right," he said. "You get over it. You have to, if you want to go on driving. It doesn't pay to brood."

"It must be like bullfighting. Or test piloting."

"In a way," he said and changed the subject. He had met too many women fascinated only by the glamour of motor-racing: he found himself hoping that Miss Bartell was different. "What does your father want to see me about?"

"Didn't he say in his letter?"

"No. He just introduced himself and asked me to come and see him. I made a few inquiries about him——" He smiled. "Perhaps I should have heard of his tyres. But, frankly, I hadn't."

"The Bartell tyre is not one of the big ones back home. I even have friends who have never heard of it."

"But I gathered your father was a big man."

She smiled. "He is, I guess. But big men don't necessarily have to be well known. My father started with nothing. Everything he's done he's done himself."

"I admire that."

Then the door opened and Joseph Bartell came in. As he crossed the room towards them Sophie saw his hand go to his pocket. He never turned on his hearing-aid unless he wanted to listen to people. "Mr. Rafferty. Sorry I'm late. My daughter looked after you?"

"Very well." Ham stood up, moving stiffly.

"Get me a drink, will you, Sophie?" Bartell sat down. His voice was a rough rasp, some of the words slurred and chopped before they had reached his lips; he had come a long way from New York's lower East Side, but part of it had followed him. He turned to Ham. "Suppose you're wondering why I asked you here, eh?"

"I've wondered, Mr. Bartell. But I haven't made any guesses."

Ham, sitting opposite Bartell, saw a man almost as tall as himself, a dark thin camel of a man who sat awkwardly in his chair. The stiff grey hair was close-cut, the veins in the temples showing clearly. Ham sat and waited for Bartell to speak. Sophie came back with a glass of something colourless. "Vichy water," said Bartell, taking it. "It's all I drink."

Sophie smiled at both of them and went out of the room.

Bartell looked after her a moment, smiling. Then he said suddenly, "Mr. Rafferty, what do you know about tyres?"

"No more than any other driver whose life depends on a good set of them. I'm no technical expert, Mr. Bartell."

"You ever hear of the Bartell tyres before I wrote to you?"

"Yes," said Ham.

"You're lying," said Bartell, as if he were no more than telling Ham that his bootlace was undone. "Don't butter me up, Mr. Rafferty. I have three thousand employees who get paid to butter me up."

"Righto," said Ham and grinned; it was possible that he might come to like this man. "I'd never heard of them."

"And that's one of the reasons why I wanted to see you. A professional driver, and he's never heard of the Bartell tyre. And I'll bet there are hundreds, maybe thousands, like you."

"It could be, Mr. Bartell. There are a lot of American products that we haven't heard of on this side of the Atlantic."

"You've heard of other American tyres. But none of them better than a Bartell. And none of them as good as the one I've got back home waiting to be tested."

Ham put the question that was expected of him. "Is that why you asked me to come? You've got a tyre you want me to test?"

"Exactly." The big hands slapped together: it was like two handfuls of bones meeting. "You said something a minute ago, Mr. Rafferty. A driver whose life depends on his tyres. All drivers' lives depend on their

tyres, Sunday drivers as well as professionals like you. A car is only as good as its tyres, as far as safety goes. Right?"

It was an argument that had several points, but Ham hadn't come to argue. "Right."

"Okay." Bartell took a sip of Vichy water. "I've designed a tyre that's got twice as much durability as anything now on the market. But that isn't all. My tyre reduces the chances of skid by close to fifty per cent. You went off the track at Le Mans because of a skid. You'd be a man who'd appreciate a tyre that wouldn't skid. Am I right?"

Ham asked a question instead of answering one. "Are you offering me a job to test your tyre in a race?"

Bartell had another sip of Vichy water. "Mr. Rafferty, I know a lot about you. I knew a lot about you before I came over here from the States. I know that you've been runner-up in the World Championship. You know all the tracks in Europe, and everyone who goes to the tracks knows you," said Bartell. "You get your name in the papers, advertising gasoline and chewing-gum. You haven't ever advertised tyres. You're considered one of the best drivers in the world on a wet track. I know you aren't signed up with one of those factory-sponsored teams—what do you call them, works teams—like the one you drove for last season. I checked on that. You've got brains—I checked on that, too—and you've got guts. You're the man I want."

Ham had never had himself so succinctly catalogued before. "Maybe I am the man you want," he said after a minute. "I don't want to be rude, Mr. Bartell. But what if I don't want your job?"

"I haven't finished yet, Mr. Rafferty," said Bartell. "I'll give you twenty thousand dollars to work for me for one year. That's just over seven thousand pounds. And you won't have to drive in more than two races."

"What do I do the rest of the time?"

"You test my tyres. You test them till we know we've done everything we can to perfect them."

"And what races do I drive in?"

"The Mille Miglia and the Le Mans."

The race that killed Dad and the one that almost killed me. And then Ham knew that Bartell's proposition had suddenly become a problem.

"I see it this way." Bartell's dark bony fingers stuck up like rusty spikes.

"First, I've got to do something spectacular to show up my tyres against those of the big fellers. Second, something to boast about in my advertising would be a couple of big European races that were won on my tyres. Third, all the works teams on this side are signed up already with the big tyre manufacturers over here. So I buy a good car, one you choose yourself, I get you to drive it, and that's it. If the whole deal costs me fifty thousand, seventy thousand dollars, it's still cheap. When I go back home and start my advertising campaign, I'll really have something to boast about."

"I could choose my own car?"

"Jaguar, Mercedes, Ferrari, Maserati, Aston Martin, anything you like. All I want is you to have a car you can win with."

"Do you want my answer today?"

"No, no. Tomorrow will do. Take your time."

"Thank you," said Ham, but Bartell missed the irony.

Sophie Bartell came back into the room as Ham stood up. His leg had begun to ache and had stiffened; but only when Sophie came forward with Ham's walking-stick did Bartell notice it. "You have to walk with a stick?" he asked with surprise. "You didn't tell me."

"You didn't ask me, Mr. Bartell. Matter of fact, you didn't once ask me how I'd come out of the Le Mans crack-up. Oh, I'm all right, and the leg will be too, in a month or so. You don't have to worry."

"I'm sorry I didn't ask how you were," Bartell said. "I guess all I wanted to talk about was my tyre. I'm sorry, Mr. Rafferty."

"I'll ring you on Monday," Ham said, leaning on his stick. "You'll know my answer then, one way or the other."

"I hope the answer'll be yes," said Bartell and put out his hand. "You're the man I want."

At the door Sophie turned to speak to her father. "I'm going down to the beauty parlour." But Bartell was gazing out of the window and he didn't turn round. Sophie closed the door as she and Ham stepped out into the corridor. "He's got his hearing-aid turned off. He turns it off when he wants to dream about his tyre." Ham thought he detected a note of bitterness, but he said nothing. As they walked along the hall towards the lift, Sophie said, "Will you take the job?"

"I'll have to think about it." He smiled down at her. "How much time do you spend with your father and his tyres?"

"Very little." Sophie was aware of his physical presence beside her and could feel it working on her. She had never been a girl who was ashamed of the physical attraction men had for her. This man beside her suggested power and strength, that was useless to deny; but he was a stranger to her, and it would be best if he remained one. His world was one that she did not know and had no desire to know. Her mother had never known her father's world and Sophie had seen the effect it had had on her. All at once, without knowing why, she said, "Is that all you can do? Drive a car?"

"Yes," he said and felt annoyance seeping through him. "I've got only the one trade. How many have you?"

She flushed. "I'm sorry. I—I just wondered what the future held for men like you."

"We don't think much about the future in our game."

No, she thought. And that would be one good reason why I shouldn't want to get to know you any better than I do now.

CHAPTER 3

IAM TURNED into the Great West Road and opened up the Jensen. He was doing eighty when the rain began to fall. Before he realized what he was doing, his foot eased on the accelerator and his speed dropped to fifty. At first he was amused at himself, and then a little shocked. His hands had tightened on the wheel, and he was aware of a tenseness in his stomach that he usually got only in races at the worst moments. He had had it at Le Mans when he knew that he was going off the track. Now suddenly his palms were sweating, and that was something that had not happened for years.

He eased his foot still further, and reached into his pocket for a stick of gum. It was an almost automatic action, the way other men would reach for a cigarette in a moment of stress. He had never smoked. His father had advised him to chew gum to keep his mouth from becoming dry during the long hours of a race; later he had found that it helped him to relax while driving. Up to now he had never felt the need of it while driving away from the track.

By the time he reached Stoke Poges it had stopped raining. He ran the Jensen into the garage, and limped across the gravel drive to the

house. It was one of the few solid legacies Pat Rafferty had left to his wife and family. He had bought it on the unwanted advice of his father-in-law, against his own inclination. There was nothing wrong with the house; Pat Rafferty just didn't like anything that resembled a home, a word that seemed to frighten him.

Ham grimaced as he came round the corner of the house and saw his grandfather's Rover parked before the front door.

"Is that you, Ham?" his mother called as he entered the front hall. "Grandfather's here."

He threw his cap on the stand in the hall, and went into the living-room. "Hello, Grandad."

He knew his grandfather hated being called Grandad. Brigadier Allday stiffened in his chair. If he had had his way his grandsons would have called him Sir, but his rebellious Irish son-in-law had never been one to teach his sons anything as conventional as that.

Brigadier Allday stroked his hooked nose, the one thing he had in common with his elder grandson. He had been a soldier all his life and he no longer wore uniform, but he dressed each morning as if for inspection. "Hamilton, your mother tells me you are not going to drive for the works team next season. Are you retiring from racing?"

"I don't know," Ham said, swallowing a scone. "I hadn't got as far as planning *that* definitely."

"You never were a planner. Neither was your father."

Ham felt a sudden spasm of resentment, but he said nothing. He had never been able to get on with his grandfather; and yet he knew that his grandfather's intentions were the best.

Allday glanced across the room. One entire wall was almost obliterated by the trophies won by Pat Rafferty and his two sons: the room shone with the triumphs of the past. They were cleaned regularly once a week, and the room burnt with their cold fire. They were not admired by Brigadier Allday, whose own study walls were covered with muskets, swords, and the horns of animals that had run the wrong way and then not fast enough.

"I hope you do retire," Allday said. "Give up sport and settle down to behaving like an adult. England needs workers at a time like this, Hamilton, not playboys. I'd like to see you settled down to some sort of career. What are you now—thirty-two?"

"Thirty-three," said Ham. "Old for a playboy."

Allday smiled a wintry smile. "I have a few contacts in the City. If you wish I can get you some introductions."

"I'll give it serious thought, Grandad. Really."

"Don't waste too much time," said Allday and stood up.

Janet followed her father to the door. "Ham and Taz and I will come over at the week-end to see you. By then, Ham may have decided to go into the City. I'll buy him some striped trousers and a brief-case, just in case."

"Good-bye, Hamilton," Allday said. "And remember. You can't go on driving racing cars for ever."

Ham sat staring into the fire. His grandfather had just stated the obvious. You can't go on driving racing cars for ever. Every race has its casualties; every season its deaths. You didn't have to be a novice to die. Ascari had gone, while only practising; Pierre Levegh, Varzi, Dick Seaman, his own father: they had all gone out to drive once too often. The cars had even caught the greatest of them all in the end: they had never been able to take Tazio Nuvolari off the road and kill him, so they had killed him with their exhaust fumes. Nuvolari had been Pat's one and only idol, and Taz had been named after him. He had driven till he was well past middle age, but he had coughed blood for the last two years of his life and had been in a paralytic coma when he had died. And it was the cars that had killed him.

Ham's leg had begun to ache again, and he began to move about the room. Something was stirring inside him, and only memory told him that it was fear; he hadn't been afraid since he was a child, and then only in the dark. He had not been afraid even during the war, although he had had moments of sweating doubt; he had flown a plane with the same skill and confidence with which he was later to drive a car. He had never despised men who were afraid. Fear was there in every man, a part of him as much as blood and bone and intestines. He remembered discussing Saint-Exupéry with Taz when they had been talking about the daring of some driver. The French airman, one of the few authors who appealed to them both, had written about courage that it was a concoction of feelings: a touch of anger, a spice of vanity, a lot of obstinacy, a tawdry sporting thrill, above all a stimulus of one's physical energies. Up to now he had never analysed what it was that made him

drive as he did, day after day through the long summer, and why, when each season was finished, he had looked forward impatiently to the next. *Had* looked forward to. But not to next season, now only six months away.

His mother came back into the room, buttoning her cardigan to the throat. "It's chilly." She went to the fire and threw more coal on it.

"The place will warm up, now Grandad's gone," he said.

"You shouldn't talk like that," she said. "I know he's a bit of a trial, but he does try to be helpful." She gathered up the tea things. "Taz rang up from the office this afternoon. He's going to drive in the Formula Two races next season. And in the Ulster this month."

Ham had walked to the window, but now he turned slowly back. "He's going to *what*?"

"I thought it would surprise you. It surprised me."

"Who's he driving for?"

"For the Bourne End team." The Bourne End team was a private team financed by a wealthy spark-plug manufacturer. "He told me he'd written to them the week after Le Mans."

The room was dark now, lighted only by the glow from the fire: Janet's shadow skipped over the glimmering trophies. "He waited till I regained consciousness then."

"Ham, don't talk like that!" The cups rattled on the tray. "Look, I don't like this any more than you do. I haven't minded his driving in the small-car races—there's less danger in those, and we both know he is a good driver. But I've never wanted him to drive in the big cars, and certainly not while you were still racing. That's why I made him give me his promise. I wanted to have one of you with me while the other was racing. You were the elder and so you were the first on the track. But Taz has his father's blood, just as you have, and we can't blame him for wanting to have his chance, now that you have retired."

"He didn't know I had retired. Not a week after Le Mans. I was still in splints and bandages." He turned sharply away from her, on his bad leg, and had a sudden spasm of pain. He groped for a chair.

"Is your leg hurting, Ham?" she asked anxiously.

"Yes." And that wasn't all that was hurting.

"You see, then?" she said. "It may be ages before you can drive again. A racing driver needs two good legs."

There was the sound of a key in the front door, and from the hall Taz called, "Where are you, Mother?" He came into the living-room and kissed his mother's cheek. "Hello, what's this? A secret meeting?"

Janet went out to the kitchen with the tea tray, and Taz dropped into a chair. He was a handsome boy; both strength and a touch of the æsthetic were there in his face. His voice was higher and quicker than Ham's. Everything about him was quick and light.

"Mum tells me you're going to drive in the Ulster."

The caution dropped like a veil over Taz's face. "Yes. I'm having a go in a Cooper-Bristol. I've got to start some time."

"I suppose so," Ham said, with bitterness.

"You don't have to be like that." Taz tried to look proud and defiant. "You've retired."

"Who said so?"

"Well, you have, haven't you?" Outside in the kitchen the teacups ceased to rattle: was Janet listening, waiting for his answer, too?

Ham leaned back in his chair, straightening his left leg out in front of him. He had left Bartell with a simple decision to make, and yet every minute since, beginning with the rain on the Great West Road, the decision had become more complex until now his head ached with the problems of it.

"I don't know," he said. "I'm still making up my mind."

"I took it for granted," Taz said, looking at the stiffened leg.

And that's been the trouble, Ham thought. You and Mum have taken so much for granted since Dad was killed. When Pat Rafferty died, he had left behind him only the house, the trophies and six hundred pounds. Robert Allday had offered to help, but Janet, knowing how her father had been against her marriage, had refused his help. To Ham had fallen the responsibilities of head of the family. It was he who paid the bills, maintained the house, put Taz through school, even got Taz the job with the firm for which he sold cars. For the first four years after his father's death he had been in debt; then he had reached the top bracket as a driver and his income had begun to swell. He was able to command bigger appearance money, he had got into the big prize money, firms had paid him to endorse their products in advertisements. He had signed with a works team at a guaranteed figure, had appeared on television and doubled for a film star in a picture about motor-racing. For two years

his income had topped ten thousand pounds; but all he had in the bank now was a little over two thousand. It had all gone for taxes, the rising cost of living, the expense of a good education, and the high expenses that were part of the profession of a racing driver. True, he hadn't thought much about saving, reckoning on at least another five years of racing before he would have to think about retiring. The money had come in and gone out, and Taz and his mother had taken it all for granted.

"What else can I do?" he said suddenly, and it was like a cry of anguish. "Grandad wants me to go into the City!"

Taz got up. "I don't like my job any more than you'd like the City," he said, and made selling cars sound like a job in the salt mines.

Ham looked with sudden sympathy at his brother, but all he could say was, "I want another season at least."

Taz spun round. "Why must you be so bloody selfish? When will you have had enough?"

Then Janet came back into the room. "What's going on here?" But she knew what had been going on, and her face told it plainly.

"We've been talking about my retiring," Ham said, trying to control his anger. "Only I haven't made up my mind yet."

"Are you going to sign again with the works team?" Janet asked.

Ham shook his head. "I've had an offer from an American tyre manufacturer."

"Oh, then, you're not going to race?" Taz looked suddenly relieved. "You're going to sign as a test driver or something?"

"In a way," Ham said. "But he wants me to drive in two races, the Mille Miglia and the Le Mans." He explained who Bartell was and what he wanted. As he talked he realized that he had become a test driver. He was still a racing driver, but he was on his way out. He was like the *matinée* idol who had at last been asked to play someone's father. If he hadn't yet completely retired, he had at least begun. He hoped that made both his mother and Taz a little happier.

But it hadn't; at least not Taz. "Then you haven't really retired?"

"No," Ham said bluntly. "I haven't."

Taz thumped the sideboard. "How long do you want the bloody limelight? I'm sorry, Mother. But it isn't fair! He's had ten years of it now. Not the limelight—I didn't mean that. But doing what he wants

to do, doing what *I* want to do! Driving cars. How long can you expect me to sit about and wait? I'm twenty-one. Dad drove in *his* first Grand Prix at twenty."

"Your father was different," said Janet, and closed that line of argument. She turned to Ham. "The Bourne End team was going to take Taz on full time."

"I'm sorry about that," Ham said. "Unless you'll let him drive?"

Janet shook her head. "Not while you're driving. I made him promise me that and I'm keeping him to it."

Taz went to the window, staring out at the last light of the day. "How long have I got to wait, then?" he said, and the question was directed at Ham, not his mother.

Suddenly Ham was all anger. He stood up, twisting away from his chair, hurting his leg but ignoring it. "My God, who are you to talk about things being unfair? Who paid to keep this family going all these years? I've got only two thousand quid left in the bank. It's more than a lot of people have, I know. But it won't buy me a business or a career that will bring me the money to let us go on living the way we have been. I've been offered seven thousand quid for this job, just to drive in two races. I haven't accepted it yet, but I haven't turned it down, either. You can bloody well wait till I'm good and ready to retire!"

"Ham!"

But he didn't turn back as his mother called after him. He stamped out of the house into the cold evening, and was glad of its coldness: it was like water on the fire of his anger. He got into the Jensen and drove back to London, to his flat in Cromwell Road.

THE FLAT was a typical bachelor's apartment, with dishes stacked up in the kitchen, an unmade bed, and a carpet of copies of *Motor Sport*. It was not an ideal place for cogitation, but it was better than Stoke Poges. And Ham had plenty to think about.

He had an almost sleepless night and when he rose in the morning his thoughts were no more ordered than the bed in which he had tossed and turned. There was no food in the flat and he breakfasted on a cup of black coffee. Then he rang the Dorchester.

Sophie Bartell answered. "You've made up your mind, Mr. Rafferty?"

"Well, not quite," he said and wanted to prolong the conversation; she

had a pleasant voice, even over the phone. "But you're going to be in London for a while, aren't you?"

"You mean me or my father?" She had caught his inference.

"Both."

"I'll put you on to my father," she said.

Then Bartell's voice, as rough as a rusted exhaust pipe, said, "Morning, Mr. Rafferty. You made up your mind, eh?"

"No," Ham said. "I'd like a little more time."

"It's not your leg? You're not stalling for time?"

"The leg is going to be all right," he said, a little irritably. "It's just that there are so many things to consider."

There was a silence, then: "All right, Mr. Rafferty. My daughter and I are going over to Italy for a few weeks. I'll want your answer when we get back. You understand?"

"I understand," he said, sarcastically servile.

"And Mr. Rafferty." Ham waited. "In the meantime look round for a car to drive in the race. Pick a good one. Good-bye."

The phone went dead, and Ham put it down. *In the meantime look round for a car to drive.* Well, there was one man who had no doubt what his decision would be.

Ham did spend the next few weeks looking about for a car. He looked at all the cars he thought would stand a chance of winning the Mille Miglia; and couldn't make up his mind about any of them. He had never before been forced to choose a car for just one particular race. For sheer speed he liked the Ferrari. The Jaguar had speed and good brakes, but for some reason its record in the Mille Miglia was not as good as in other races. He had never driven a Mercedes and he would prefer an easier race in which to make his debut in it. He liked the Maserati, but he had never had any luck in one of them and, like all drivers, he had his superstitions. The Aston-Martin was a good car, fast on the straights and good on the corners, but it, too, had to prove itself in the Mille Miglia.

But before he went looking for a car, he went back home to Stoke Poges. Nothing was said about the argument, but for a few days the three of them behaved like guests at a seaside hotel, polite but distant. Gradually they fitted back into the regular pattern of their life before the row; but in the week before Taz went across to Ireland to drive in the Ulster

Tourist Trophy, the atmosphere became strained again. Janet was going with him. But Taz didn't ask Ham if he wanted to go till two days before they were to leave.

"I wondered if I was going to be asked," Ham said.

"I didn't know if you would want to come," Taz said.

Then Ham realized how churlish he had been. "Of course I want to come," he said. "I'll go round the course with you at practice, if you like. Maybe I can give you some hints."

"I wish you would," said Taz and looked genuinely pleased.

So the three of them went and Taz drove a very creditable fourth behind three experienced professionals. The newspapers heralded the entry of another Rafferty into the racing world. The Irish papers were particularly ecstatic: Pat Rafferty had been a national hero.

Immediately after the race Taz bubbled over with as much elation as if he had won. But going back on the plane he had quieted down, and he remained like that after they had reached home. He was waiting for Ham to say whether he was retiring or not.

Ham's leg got better; he went to the specialist who had been treating him and was told he was now completely recovered, and he put the stick away in a cupboard. Then he came to his decision.

At the end of the first week in October he rang the Dorchester from the flat. Again it was Sophie Bartell who answered the phone. "My father is out at the Motor Show. Have you made up your mind?"

"Yes," he said. "Look, would you care to come to the Motor Show with me? Maybe we can pick up your father there. It'll be as good a place as any to tell him what I've decided."

"You're going to take the job, then?"

"I'll pick you up in twenty minutes," he said, avoiding the question.

He picked her up at the Dorchester. "A snappy car," she said, admiring the sleek lines of the Jensen. "But then, you racing drivers can't go about in anything sedate-looking, can you?" She looked at him quizzically; he was wearing a tan shirt, a bright-green bow tie, a yellowish plaid waistcoat, and a jacket that looked as if it would have been more at home on a horse.

He smiled, catching the meaning of her look. "No," he said and for the first time for years became embarrassed by his eccentricity of dress. "I'm the type who has to carry his atmosphere with him."

In the big exhibition hall they walked among the shine and glitter of the new cars on display. They looked at poems of design; and at creations that hurt the eyes. They looked at luxurious cars and at cars that had been built solely for speed and power. Chrome glittered, paint reflected faces, and plush interiors beckoned.

They met an old friend of Ham's, Richie Launder, standing in front of the Jaguar exhibit admiring the latest XK140. He stood there, a short, fat figure whose hands betrayed his trade. The hands and nails had been scrubbed, but the grease had become part of the skin. He had been claimed and branded by the cars he loved.

"G'day," he said in his flat, gravelly voice; his throat always sounded as if it were lined with sand. He waited for Ham to introduce Sophie and then gave her a smile that winked gold. "An American? Waddya think of the lousy climate here?"

"Richie is an Australian," Ham explained. "He does nothing but complain about the English weather."

"Why don't you go home, then?" Sophie asked.

"That's what all the English say," said Richie. "Don't you start."

"How's business?" Ham said. Richie had come to see him in the hospital at Le Mans and had telephoned him a couple of times since he had come back to England. He knew that Richie, the best mechanic in the game, had left the works team and was now working full time in his garage at Chalfont St. Giles, about five miles from Stoke Poges.

"Today is the first day I've taken off since I came back." Richie's bald head shone under the bright lights. "I've been working all my spare time on my car."

"Your car?" Ham said. And Sophie asked, "A racing car?"

"No. A sports car. One that could be raced, but a sports car." He jerked a thumb at the Jaguar behind them. "Like this."

"How's it going?" Ham said.

"Ah, all right." Richie shrugged. "I got the chassis done, and a mock-up done of the body. But money is the thing. Where'll I get an engine to put into it? I don't wanna build a car that looks like a streak of lightning but's got no guts under the bonnet."

Then Bartell said behind them, "Mr. Rafferty. You got my daughter here. I tried to get her to come, but she said she was sick of cars and anything to do with them."

"Mr. Rafferty's persuasive powers were stronger than yours, Dad," Sophie said quickly.

Bartell looked at her, and so did Ham. He tried to remember how persuasive he had been.

"This is Mr. Launder, Dad," she was saying.

Bartell gave Richie a perfunctory handshake; he wasted no time in being polite to strangers. "You made up your mind, Mr. Rafferty?"

"Yes." Ham turned for a moment to say good-bye to Richie. Bartell took Sophie's arm and moved away a few yards.

"Who's that rude character?" Richie asked.

"My new boss," Ham said. "I'll come up one day and have a look at the car." He patted Richie's shoulder and moved after Sophie and her father.

"Well?" said Bartell.

"I'll take the job, Mr. Bartell," he said, and Sophie smiled at him, looking genuinely pleased.

"Swell! That's swell." There was no mistaking Bartell's pleasure; he put out his hand and crushed Ham's. "I'll get a lawyer, and we'll have some papers drawn up. You picked a car yet?"

"Not yet," said Ham. "It's your money I'm spending. I just want to be sure I spend it on the right car."

"I guess there's no rush," Bartell said. "The important thing is, I've got you signed up. Now we've got to start testing my tyres."

"Do I have to come to America for that?"

"That's up to you. You get more rain here and I'm trying to sell a tyre that's good in the rain."

Ham looked at Sophie and she read his thoughts. Despite herself, she had been thinking of him a lot while she had been in Italy. She had tried to analyse what attracted her to him but she couldn't name it. And now, feeling angry with herself even as she spoke, she said, "I'm staying in London for six months. Dad will be flying over to visit me once in a while. I hope," she said, looking at her father.

"Sure," said Bartell and made an awkward attempt to press her arm affectionately. "I'll come over as often as you like."

"I'll stay in England," Ham said. "Till we see how things go."

He drove them back to the Dorchester and Bartell asked him to have dinner with them. Bartell, drunk on Vichy water and the vision of his

own dream coming true, monopolized the conversation. He told Ham how he had emigrated from Italy with his parents as a child of five. "Our name was Bartelli then. My old man, he played the hurdy-gurdy in Mulberry Street for pennies. I don't think he'd believe it if he saw me here now"—and he looked round the glittering dining-room. "Then I went to work when I was twelve—moved to Akron, Ohio, when I was sixteen, and took a job in a tyre factory." He had started his own plant at the depths of the Depression, with six men working for him. His big chance had come during the war. Now here he was, dining at the Dorchester with his daughter—"Isn't she beautiful, Rafferty? That's the Italian in her"—and a famous racing driver. And with the most revolutionary development in tyres, with his name Bartell stamped on every one, all but ready to go on the market. "And now I think I'll go to bed, Rafferty."

Sophie looked after him as he crossed the room. "That's the first time I've heard him like that since I was a kid. He's happy."

"Is there any reason why he shouldn't be?" Ham said.

She clutched gently at the gold bracelet on her wrist.

"He told you only part of the story," she said. She spun the bracelet and looked down into her coffee cup. "We were a perfectly normal family until I was about, oh, seven or eight. When America came into the war. Then success came to my father. The plant became his second home. Then it became his home altogether, or just about, and it was Mother and I that came second. Have you ever seen a woman wither and die, like some flower in a drought? That's what happened to my mother. She and I moved from Akron back to New York—my mother had come from there. The night before we were to go, my father came home and pleaded with my mother to stay. But she wouldn't, they had a terrible argument, and I crouched under the bed, waiting for the lightning to strike. Next day Mother and I left for New York. I've not been back to Akron. I once saw a picture of the plant in *Fortune*, but that's all."

"And your mother?"

"She never went back, either. Dad kept us well supplied with money, but he never came near us. My mother just sort of faded away. Then one winter while I was away at college she got pneumonia. The doctors said she didn't seem to want to live. You've got to understand"—she leaned forward—"she *loved* my father, really loved him. She was Italian. A lot

of American women, maybe English women, too—they just can't love like that."

"My mother could," he said. "She almost died of grief when my father was killed."

"Then you do understand about my mother. Well, Dad came East for the funeral. He stayed three days, and we hardly had a word to say to each other. We were strangers with the same name. He went back to Akron, and I went back to college. Occasionally we exchanged letters. When I graduated, I got a job in the research department of a magazine. Then early this year Dad came to New York, told me he was coming to Europe this summer and asked me to come with him. I couldn't refuse. Suddenly I was sorry for him."

"But you're still getting used to him?"

"You'd be surprised just how hard it is to get to know your father again. You have to undo all your memories and start all over again. That is, if you want to love him. And I want to love him. I'm an Italian, too. At least that way."

"You mean if you love anyone, it has to be all the way?"

"I don't know if it's good, not being able to love just to a degree, the way some women can. And yet I'm glad I'm not like them."

"So am I," he said.

CHAPTER 4

I AM HAD driven back to Stoke Poges the night before with a mixture of light-heartedness and foreboding. Now he had made his decision he felt better. Yet he knew that Taz wasn't going to like it.

Now Taz, at the other end of the breakfast table, had put down *The Times* and was saying, "We've all been expecting Lamott to retire, but not to start the season and then chuck it up." Lamott was an international Rugger winger; he had been playing for England since the end of the war. "That leaves the wing place wide open."

"Do you think you might get it?" Janet said.

In the winter Taz played Rugger and last season had distinguished himself in inter-Counties matches as a winger. "Oh, I don't know," he said. Taz really didn't care about Rugger and looked on it only as something to fill in the autumn and winter Saturday afternoons.

"It would be nice if you got an International cap," Janet said.

"We could hang it up there with Dad's helmet," Ham said.

"We should not," said Janet. "We don't want the wall cluttered up with headgear."

Despite her tone, Ham knew how she felt about his father's helmet. It meant more to her than all the trophies Pat Rafferty had won: to her it was her knight's helmet. Ham changed the subject and spoke to Taz. "How old would Lamott be?"

"Thirty-one or two," Taz said. "Time he retired."

"Speaking of retiring," Ham said, and both Taz and Janet looked up. "I'm not. I've told Bartell I'll take up his offer."

Taz said nothing for a moment. His young, thin face seemed to crumble. Then abruptly he stood up, flung *The Times* savagely across the room, and strode, almost ran, out and upstairs to his room.

"I thought he'd grown up," Ham said.

Janet began to butter some toast. "I wonder how you would react if you happened to be denied something you'd always wanted? You never have been denied anything, you know." She looked up and saw the hurt and angry look on his face. "You think I'm taking his side, but I'm not. I'm on nobody's side but my own."

The anger died at once. "I'm sorry, Mum. Would *you* like me to retire? I mean, for your sake?"

The toast broke under her knife. "Don't ask me to make your decisions for you, Ham. No woman should ever have to do that for a man. Perhaps it's just as well you never married. One woman to worry about you is enough."

HAM DROVE up to Chalfont St. Giles that morning. He had decided to ask Richie Launder to help him choose a car. No one knew cars better than Richie, and Ham knew he would feel better if he had someone to back his judgment when he finally made his choice.

Richie had come to England with the Royal Australian Air Force in 1940 as a bomber pilot. He had met and married a girl from Lincolnshire in 1943 and six months later had crashed on the way back from a raid on Berlin. He had spent the rest of the war in hospital and in a prisoner-of-war camp. He had never gone back home to Australia, but he still wrote regularly, once a week, to his family in New South Wales.

He was at the garage when Ham drove up. "I've come up to look at the car," Ham said, and Richie, looking pleased, led the way across a small back yard into a long galvanized shed. "There it is, sport," he said.

Ham walked slowly round the car. As always when he was with cars, other things dropped out of his mind. "Who designed this?" he asked.

Richie looked at him in surprise. "I did, of course. All I want now is an engine."

Ham stood back from the car admiringly. He had always known that Richie was a good engineer, as good as they came; he had never realized that the bald little fat man was also an artist. Even allowing for the roughness of the mock-up, the car body was a thing of beauty. All its lines flowed strongly and evenly towards the rear; there was not a weak curve in the whole conception of the body styling. The car *looked* swift, even standing still. "What's the chassis?" he asked.

"I modelled it on the Maserati, with a few adjustments of my own. Independent front suspension, and, if I can get them, it'll have disc brakes. We mounted an old Austin A70 engine in it one day last week and tried it out. She went all right," he said, his plump face bright with pride. "I'd like to try it with an engine with more power." He patted the plaster moulding of the body. "What I gotta find is enough dough to buy me one Jaguar XK140, try it out and show how good my car is, maybe at Oulton Park or Goodwood, and have enough still left in the bank to put in an order for another five or six engines if the orders came in. Ah, I wish I had the cash for whatever I wanted."

At last Ham said, "If you got the right engine, do you think your car could stand up to the Mille Miglia and then the Le Mans?"

"I'm not building that car to race it," Richie said. "Not in something as tough as the Mille Miglia."

"No, but could you?" Ham persisted.

"I reckon I could," Richie said with quiet confidence. "The strength is there in the chassis and frame. It might need strengthening in one or two places, but I built it to take punishment. Why?"

"I've just signed to drive in the Mille Miglia and the Le Mans next year," Ham said and told Richie about his job with Bartell. "I've been told to choose my own car."

Richie's face lighted up. "You gotta have a big car to win the big prizes, Ham. You know that."

"In the Le Mans, yes. But I'll worry about that one later. In the Mille Miglia it's the driver who wins the race, not the car. In 1947, the last time I drove in it, Nuvolari would have won it in a little Cisitalia if his engine hadn't flooded on the run between Turin and Milan. A car with a top speed of one fifty has just as much chance as anything over that. You don't win the Mille Miglia on the stretches. You win it on the bends and in the mountains. You build me a car that can stand up to that thousand miles, and I'll buy you a Jaguar D-type engine and take my chances on winning."

"It'd be something, wouldn't it, if we could do it? A car out of a backyard shed and a bloke that everyone had written off after Le Mans." Richie put out his hand. "We'll show 'em, sport. When do we get together with this Bartell?"

WHEN HAM got back home he put through a call to Bartell: "I've got a proposition to put to you regarding the car I'm going to drive. It could help you publicity-wise, and it could help a man who has designed what looks to me like a good car."

"All right, what's the deal?"

"Are you free this afternoon?" Ham asked, and Bartell said he was. "Righto, I'll pick you up and bring you down here and show you the car." He hesitated. "Perhaps your daughter would like to come, too?"

Bartell must have turned away from the phone, putting his hand over it. Then he said suddenly, "She'd love to come. Those are her words, not mine."

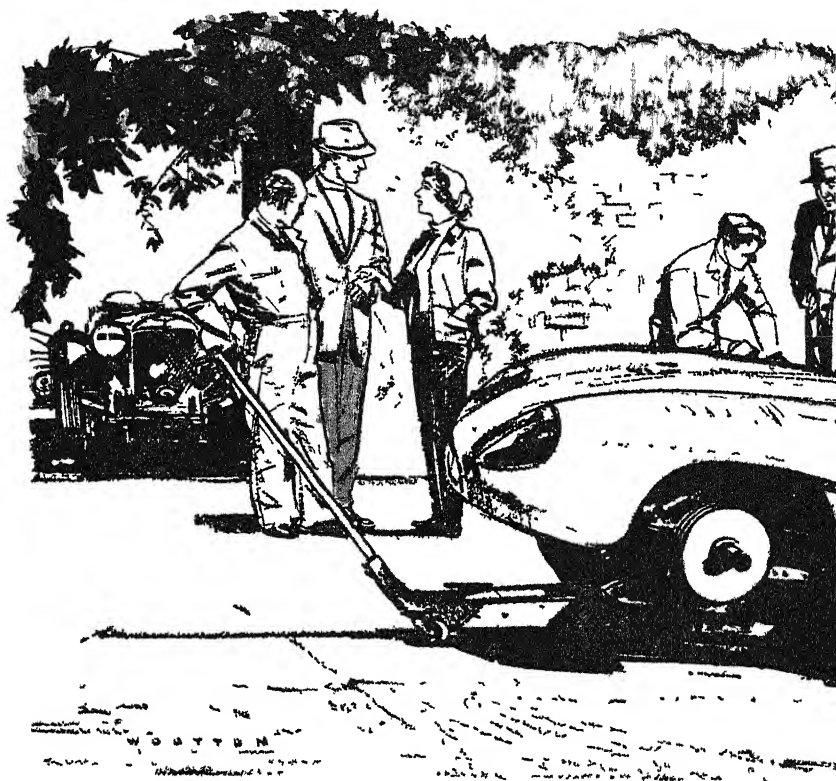
Ham smiled into the phone; he was beginning to like this abrupt American. "I'll pick you up at two thirty."

He then telephoned Richie and told him what he had arranged. After lunch he drove up to London. At the Dorchester, Bartell and Sophie were waiting for him. "You're late," said Bartell, looking at an enormous gold wrist-watch.

"So were you," said Ham, "the first day you asked me to call."

Bartell looked at him. "You're not going to butter me up, eh, Rafferty? Is that it?"

"Being late was not intentional," Ham said. "But I'm not used to buttering people up, either."



"Attaboy," said Sophie, and her father looked at her. But she was smiling, and after a moment he smiled, too. Father and daughter were coming to know each other.

"Does he butter you up?" said Bartell, still smiling at her.

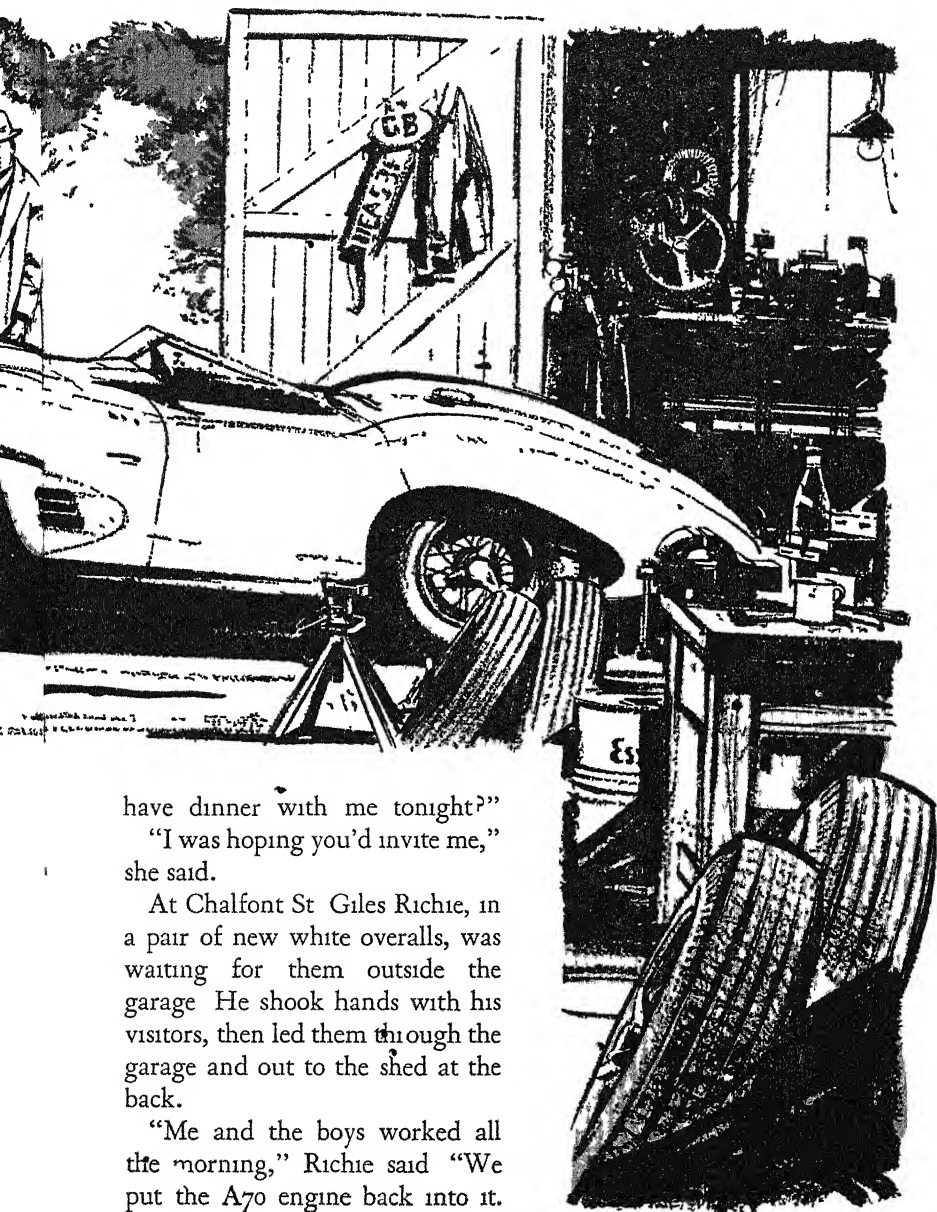
But Sophie wasn't embarrassed; she wanted to know what Ham's reaction to her had been. "Do you, Mr. Rafferty?"

"I don't butter up women," Ham said, joining in the joke, part of their circle. "Only the foolish ones."

"Let's go," said Bartell. "I don't want to get into a discussion on the foolishness of women." He went out to the car. Sophie looked up at the soft, battered hat Ham had put on as some concession to formality.

"You look better in a cap."

"The hat was part of buttering you up," Ham said. "Will you



have dinner with me tonight?"

"I was hoping you'd invite me," she said.

At Chalfont St Giles Richie, in a pair of new white overalls, was waiting for them outside the garage. He shook hands with his visitors, then led them through the garage and out to the shed at the back.

"Me and the boys worked all the morning," Richie said. "We put the A70 engine back into it."

Afterwards, we'll take the body mock-up off it, Ham, and you might like to try it out."

Bartell walked round the car, making no comment at all. Sophie had gasped at her first sight of the car and clasped her hands together; and Ham had been pleased. At last Bartell said, "It looks all right to me. Now what's the proposition, Rafferty?"

"I still have to test this car, Mr. Bartell," said Ham. "But I know Richie's worth as a mechanic—and I'm willing to take him at his word that this is a good car. I like the body design very much. I had a look at the chassis and I like what he's done there, too. But it needs a powerful engine. Now if we could interest Jaguar in letting us have one of their engines, with an option for further orders of them, I think we might have a car here that could win us the Mille Miglia."

"I want to win the Le Mans Twenty-four Hour, too," said Bartell.

"We'll worry about Le Mans later, if you don't mind," Ham said. "A driver prepares for one race at a time, Mr. Bartell."

"I see what you mean." Bartell was not completely insensitive. "So what's your idea?"

"Well, if a brand-new car with a brand-new tyre won the Mille Miglia, wouldn't the publicity be double?"

"I'd want to know more about this car before I'd go risking my tyres on it," Bartell said.

"Would you mind risking a little money?" Ham said. "Look, the Mille Miglia isn't until next April. That gives us nearly five months for Richie to build his car and for us to find out if it's good enough. He'll need staking, but whatever it costs, it'll cost you less than if I chose, say, a Ferrari. That is, if the car turns out to be a good 'un. If it doesn't——"

Richie said suddenly, "If it doesn't turn out to be any good, Mr. Bartell, I'll sell my garage to repay what you spend on it."

"Go on, Dad," said Sophie. "It's worth the risk. And besides, it's the little man starting out to compete against the big fellows on their own ground. I should think you'd want to back Mr. Launder, if only for old times' sake."

"I'd want some facts," Bartell said cautiously.

"I've got all the facts, Mr. Bartell," said Richie. "I thought you might want 'em."

"While you tell him," Ham said, "I'll take the car out."

One of the mechanics helped Ham and Richie lift the body from the chassis. The car was now just a skeleton and a heart. Ham had another close look at the chassis, checking the suspension and the brakes, testing the strength of the tubular framing on which the body had been mounted; then he settled himself into one of the old bucket seats that had been fitted into it and started up the engine. Then he looked at Sophie. "Want to come? It'll be pretty blowy and uncomfortable."

But she had already clambered into the other seat beside him. "Let's go, mister."

Bartell looked down at Sophie, then back at Ham. "Bring my daughter back just the way she is now."

Ham nodded; then he let in the gears and rolled out into the street. "Hang on," he said. "This'll be nothing like riding in a Cadillac."

Ham took the car up along the Aylesbury road, and Sophie, sitting beside him, was amazed at the mixture of relaxation and concentration he showed. He drove sitting well back from the wheel in what she was later to learn was the Italian style; yet he was studying every movement and reaction of the car to his work on the wheel and on the brakes. At eighty miles an hour they swept into the wind, and Sophie was blinded by her tears.

Then Ham began to slow the car and for the first time looked at her. "Oh Lord, I'm sorry. I should have got some goggles for you."

She smiled through her tears. "Is that all? If there's any more, I think I'll get out and catch a bus back. A nice, big, Cadillac bus."

"That's all," he said, grinning. "I'll want to try it out again, somewhere where I can put the pressure on it. But I think it's going to be all right. Let's go back and see what your father has decided."

As they drove back Sophie said, "Where are you going to take me to dinner? I'd like to have dinner out here in the country. In an old English inn with the ghosts of some cavaliers."

"I don't know about the cavaliers, but I know a good old inn."

"It's all set," Richie said when they got back to Chalfont. "Joe here has asked me to go up to London and have dinner with him. We've got a few more facts to talk about." He grinned at Ham.

"You can drive Mr. Bartell back to London," Ham said. "I'm taking Sophie to dinner at Amersham."

Richie went to get his clothes and Bartell said to Ham, "I'm beginning to think you might have had a good idea. It's almost like going back twenty-five years."

"And how does it feel, Dad?" Sophie said.

"Fine," he said and looked at her. "And how do you feel?"

"Fine," she said and put her hand in Ham's.

THEY WENT to the Griffin at Amersham for dinner. There were no ghosts of cavaliers there, only a flesh-and-blood group who had come in from a point-to-point meeting.

Ham ushered Sophie to a table, then he said, "I'll give my mother a ring. Tell her I'll be staying up in London tonight."

When he came back to the table, Sophie was coming from the ladies' room. She had combed her hair and made-up her face; in the yellow light of the old dining-room she was excitingly beautiful.

"This place is wonderful," Sophie said, sitting down and looking about her at the dark beams above her head. He was pleased by her enthusiasm and was about to match her mood when one of those odd moments of seriousness he had noticed came over her.

"I've tried to learn all that I could about you," she said. "My experience as a researcher has come in handy. But I haven't learned everything there is to learn. Some things aren't in the records."

"I'm not a hard man to know. Nobody has ever complained."

"Maybe the people you knew didn't want to dig too deeply."

"Do you?"

"I'm a researcher," she said lightly. "It's an occupational disease."

A Saturday-night feeling of relaxation and freedom was filling the room. Ham reached for a roll at the same time as Sophie did, and for a moment his hand rested on hers.

"You're going to be here for six months," he said. "I shouldn't mind doing this every Saturday night. I know a lot of other old inns."

"I'm going back to Italy for three weeks, to stay with my cousins," she said, and was sorry now that she had accepted the invitation. "But when I come back——"

"Good," he said and pressed her hand. "Now what shall we do after dinner? I have a flat in London. Would you like to go back there and listen to some records?"

She shook her head. "No, Ham. Not tonight. I'm still digging. What I've dug up, I like. But I wouldn't want to spoil it. You have quite a reputation as a ladies' man, you know."

"I was no worse than a lot of others," he said.

"I'm not annoyed at you, Ham," she said and looked at him with that serious look again. "I'm no prude."

"Just careful?"

"Yes," she said. "Just careful."

They talked as they drove back to London, but the intimacy of the dinner table had gone. Ham saw the bend in the road ahead and the reflection of an approaching car's headlights on the trees. He dipped his own lights and eased the speed of the Jensen. The other car came round the bend exactly in the middle of the road. Ham jammed on the brakes, jerked the wheel to the left, heard the savage sputter of gravel beneath the wheels, felt the beginning of the skid, and heard Sophie cry out. Then he had got the Jensen back on the road and was slowing it down. The other car had disappeared round the bend.

"That bloody fool!" He stopped the car and put his arm about her. She was shivering, and he thought she was crying.

"Well!" she said at last and sat back; she had regained control of herself. "I'm glad you're as good a driver as you are."

"I drive fast, but I drive on my own side of the road and I know how to handle a car. If you'd been hurt, I'd have killed him!"

For the first time, she was afraid of him; she realized suddenly that his threat to the vanished road hog was a real one.

He started up the car again and they drove on. "Every week for six or seven months of the year, we go out and risk our necks, trying to make motoring safer." He looked at her in the reflected light from the dashboard. "We do, you know. Racing cars isn't only a sport. There's something more than that in it for me. All the time I was driving for the works team, four seasons of it, we were testing and developing things to go into the ordinary road car made by the factory. Brakes, for instance. And next year I'll be trying out your father's tyres. Everything we do makes it safer for the ordinary driver when he takes the wife and kids for a Sunday drive."

When they drew up in front of the Dorchester he went to get out. "No, don't come up, Ham. Will you ring me tomorrow?"

"If you'd like me to," he said. "You're not afraid of a ladies' man in the daytime?"

"I'm not afraid of you at all," she said and leaned forward and kissed him on the mouth. "Good night. And thanks. For a lovely dinner and for bringing me back safe and sound."

She was out of the car before he had time to return her kiss. He watched her as she went in through the bright doors of the hotel, her hair swinging loosely. She turned at the doors and waved to him, a gesture as warm and intimate as the kiss had been, then she was gone. He drove slowly to the flat, wondering what it was that made Sophie Bartell so different from the other women he had known.

CHAPTER 5

BARTELL went home to Akron and Sophie went to visit her cousins in Italy. Ham stayed at Stoke Poges with his mother, and Taz stayed at the flat; the brothers were avoiding each other, and Ham was as willing to let Taz have the flat as Taz was to take it. There were no more questions on what was going to happen next season, either on Ham's or Taz's part, and Janet lived in some silent purgatory of her own.

Richie went to see the Jaguar people. Some of them knew his reputation as a mechanic and they listened with interest to his plans. Then they agreed to sell him two engines, with an option on another six if his car proved itself in the Mille Miglia.

October was swallowed by November fog; the last of the leaves fell out of the grey skies. Bartell had opened a drawing account in Richie's name, and Richie hired two more workers and bought new equipment. The shed became even more cramped as the new equipment was moved into it; a man with a welding torch had to be careful he didn't scorch the seats of his fellow-workers.

Sophie came back from Italy and took a flat in South Kensington. Ham took her out to dinner the night she arrived. After dinner they walked back to the flat. "The wonderful thing was," Sophie said, "they knew all about you. And your father. You're famous."

"Not really," he said, smiling down at her, holding her arm and feeling that *this* was the wonderful thing. "In Brescia everyone knows

the drivers. It's because the Mille Miglia starts from there. If you had gone to some other town in Italy, they'd have never heard of me."

"You're just being modest. But I like you modest. When I first met you, I thought you were conceited. Those outlandish clothes——"

"Does the way I dress bother you?"

"Not at all. Only sometimes I feel I'd be less conspicuous if I were out with a couple of midgets."

When they reached the door of her flat, he looked at her. "Am I coming in? Or is my reputation still against me?"

She smiled. "Come in: I can always scream if you get out of hand."

In the flat, before she switched on the lights, he took her in his arms and kissed her. "I've never missed anyone before."

"I could tell by your kiss," she said softly. "I missed you, too. My cousins noticed it. They said, 'Sophie is dreaming about her driver.'"

She reached over his shoulder for the light switch, but he said, "Don't put on the light."

"Yes," she said, and did. "I'm still careful."

The next night when he took her out he made some attempt at formality. He put on a suit, a plain shirt, a four-in-hand-tie, and left off his fancy waistcoat. Sophie took one look at him and shook her head. "In future, stay just as you were. You're not Ham Rafferty any more."

"And it's Ham Rafferty you're in love with? Not me?"

"Who said I was in love with either of you?" she said and wondered how much she had given herself away.

Then in late November Bartell came back from the States with the first of his new tyres. Ham borrowed a Jaguar, and they all went up to the Silverstone course to try out the tyres.

"It might rain today," Bartell said. "Give you a chance to see how good these tyres are in the wet."

Richie and his men had taken off the Jaguar's wheels and were now fitting other wheels with Bartell's tyres. Ham was surprised at the lightness of the tyres; they felt no heavier than those used on a small car. He stripped off his jacket and pulled on overalls; then he buckled the goggles round his neck and put on a new green helmet.

"It'll be raining soon," said Sophie, looking towards the ragged clouds racing in like dark vandals from the west. "Do you think you should go out now?"

"Of course," her father said "That's what we want, rain "

"She's ready, Ham," Richie said

Ham climbed into the Jaguar and settled himself down in the seat. He tested each of the pedals, ran his hand over the gear lever and brake handle, felt the wheel to see if there was any play in it, then leaned his head back against the headrest. He breathed deeply, smelling the oil and fuel, the rubber and leather. It was the first time he had been in a racing car since Le Mans, and it felt good. It was like some sort of homecoming.

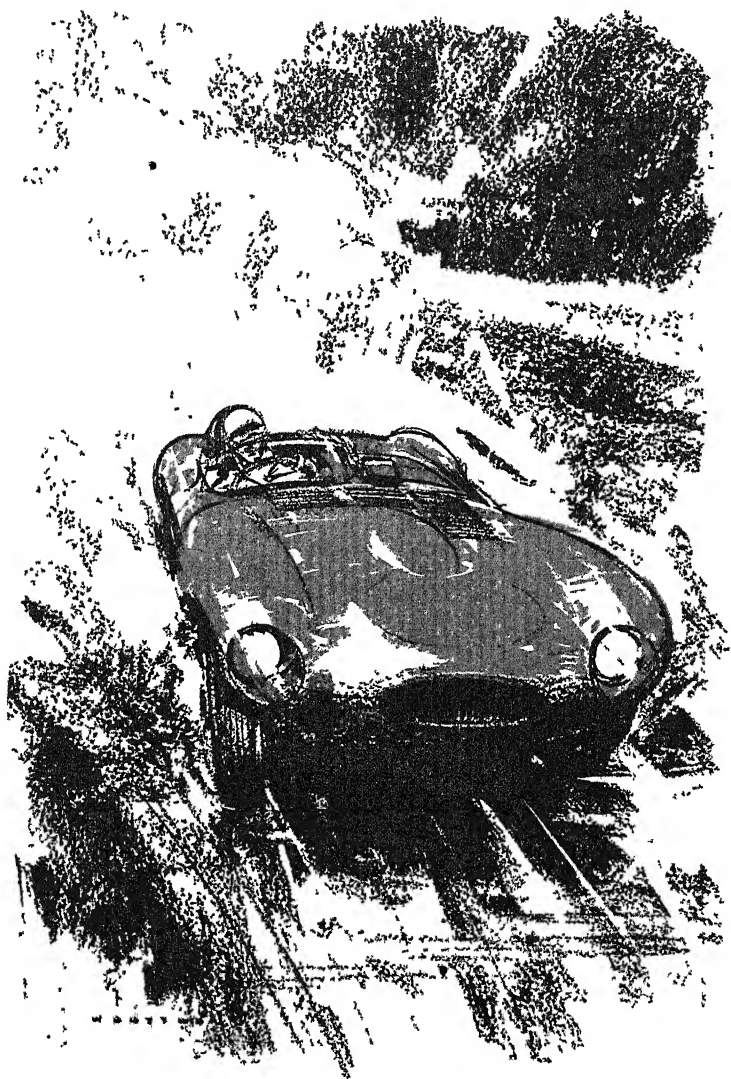
"I'll take it slowly for a lap or two," he told Bartell. "Till I get the feel of it again." He winked at Sophie, then started up the car and took it slowly out on the track. As the car gathered speed, the wind became louder and harder, pressing in on the long silver shape that was trying to defy it.

Ham went round twice, getting the feel of the car and the track, lapping at just under eighty, feeling the pleasure growing in him all the time. The third time round he opened the car up to almost maximum speed, only steadying himself on the corners as he felt for the adhesion of the tyres beneath him. The fourth time round he ran into rain as he went into Maggotts Curve. By the time he passed the stands at Stowe Corner it was raining heavily, but he kept the Jaguar going at the same steady high rate. He changed down going into Club Corner, holding the car on the line he had chosen, feeling it move away a little under him on the wet track, then changed up, accelerating again, and picked his line for Abbey Curve.

He was half-way through Abbey when the skid started. He jockeyed the wheel, working with all his old skill, quick and yet unhurried. It was a bad skid, and he knew it. The Jaguar snaked its way down the track, its spray now a curtain right across the track. It went right to the very edge of the tarmac; then Ham flicked the wheel, going against the skid now, and brought it back to the middle of the track. Then he felt the tyres take hold beneath him, and a moment later all danger was past. He took the car slowly down towards Woodcote and rolled it to a stop at the pits.

"I thought you'd bought it then, sport," Richie said, as Ham cut the engine.

"It was my tyres that got him out of it," said Bartell. "Isn't that so, Rafferty? You feel how they held you on the road?"



"That was nice drivin', Mr. Rafferty." Admiration was frank on the thin face of young George Hayes, one of Richie's new assistants; he hadn't yet learned that he had to butter up Bartell. Richie was his boss and Ham was his hero. "You done a smashin' job, keepin' her on the track."

Only Sophie said nothing. Ham, still sitting in the car, glanced up at her. Her face was pale beneath the red hood she wore. Ham reached up and took her hand. "It was all right," he said. "Even if I'd gone off the track, there'd have been no danger."

"Wouldn't there?" she said, but what he said didn't matter; she had had her moment when her heart had stopped.

Ham clambered out of the car. "This sort of thing is part of the game," he said. "You'll get used to it."

"Will I?" All she had was questions, but she didn't sound as if she wanted to learn. She had learned enough: that from now on she would ride every inch of every race with him. Every driver's wife or loved one has learned the same thing.

"With this wind the track will dry out soon," Ham said to Bartell. "I'll go round again. I'm still undecided on the tyres."

"What's the matter with 'em?" Bartell said sharply.

"I still want to test them some more," Ham said. "That's what you're paying me for, isn't it?"

Bartell backed down. "Okay. Test 'em all you want. You're the man who's got to ride on them."

"That's what I meant," Ham said and took Sophie's arm and began to walk along the track with her. "Your father's not used to anyone arguing with him, is he?"

"Oh, Ham!" Her fingers dug into his hand. "Is it going to be like this all the time?"

"You mean going against your father?" Then he looked down at her and saw that wasn't what she meant at all. There were tears on her cheeks. He put his arm round her shoulders and felt her trembling. "Darling," he said, and it was the first time he had ever used the word. None of the others had ever been called "darling," not even jokingly. "Darling, I'm sorry for you. But it's the way it is. Every man has to do certain things. I don't think there's a man in the world who hasn't some danger in his life, always there. Mine's here." He nodded at the track,

cold and empty as the frontier of death. "Some day I'll have to turn my back on it. But I can't just yet."

"Why not?" she said demanding. "Why not?"

And he knew then that it was more than just a question of working till he had something saved for his old age. He had known it ever since he had first taken a car out on to a track; but he had never tried to explain it to anyone and he couldn't now. All drivers had it, his father had had it, this compulsion, whatever it was: a disease, a fire in the blood, a desire for escape. And they were glad they had it.

"Why not, Ham? Why can't you retire now?"

He looked down at her, knowing that he could never tell her. "I shan't be racing for ever," he said. "I'll have to retire some day."

She knew he had evaded her question. They turned round and began to walk back towards the pits.

"The tread was lifting on the back tyres," Richie said. "We put on two new ones."

"Well, maybe they got rougher wear than we'd bargained for," Bartell said. "It can be overcome."

"You've never made racing tyres before, have you?" Ham said. "What's good enough for the road isn't half good enough for the track."

"We allowed for that. We got advice and we built you these tyres."

"You haven't got my advice yet," Ham said. "In the end I'm the one who has the last say."

Bartell said abruptly, "Okay, Rafferty. You're the judge."

"I'll take it out again now," Ham said to Richie.

The rain clouds had gone. In the west the sun was trying to break through for a parting stab at the earth. Ham caught a glimpse of Sophie's pale face as he accelerated away from the pits. Her raincoat was the one bright patch of colour in the fading silver of the day.

The track had dried quickly under the wind. Ham opened the Jaguar right up. He took it into the corners at maximum safety speed. He was an expert at the four-wheel drift—taking a corner with all wheels skidding; only Fangio was considered to be better at holding the line through a corner. He lapped once, but one lap at high speed is no test for new tyres. He went round four more times, drifting through the curves, taking the sharpest line on every bend, making the tyres earn every mark he was going to give them.

On the sixth lap he put his foot down as he came out of Chapel Curve and went down Hangar Straight. He went into Stowe Corner faster than on any of the previous laps, holding the car on its line, feeling the wheels beginning to slide outward; he kept his foot down, using the power in the rear wheels to push the car towards the corner and round it. The car was drifting, all four wheels in exact alignment, held on course now by the power of the engine. It was a perfect example of cornering at maximum speed, and he felt the elation well up inside him.

Then a bomb seemed to explode beneath the car. There was the loud, sharp crack as the off-side rear tyre went, and the back of the car seemed to lift for a moment. The car slewed violently; a piece of tyre was flung high, like a dead bird, and steel scraped against the tarmac. Ham threw the car out of gear and crouched lower in the cockpit, unable to do anything, as it hurtled backward off the track. Something hit him solidly in the middle of the back, his head snapped forward; then abruptly the car was still, its engine racing madly, both rear wheels twisted and splayed in the black, wet earth.

Ham switched off the engine. In the sudden silence every small sound was magnified; a sparrow whistled away with the scream of a hawk. Ham climbed slowly from the car, his neck stiff, his back paining where he had been jolted by the seat as the car had jammed to a stop. He dragged off his helmet and flipped the plugs from his ears; his goggles were already round his neck, as they had been when he had crashed at Le Mans. He stood there in the vast silence of the dying day, alone and lonely and suddenly afraid. For he was trembling violently. He turned quickly away from the car and was sick. Then he walked slowly back to the Jaguar and sat on the side of the cockpit, willing the trembling to stop and feeling it slowly subside. He searched in his pocket for some gum and found some. He was chewing when the Jensen came speeding down the straight and screeched to a stop beside the wrecked Jaguar.

Sophie was first out of the Jensen. She raced towards him and he straightened up and caught her as she flung herself against him.

"It's all right," he said. "I got out of it without a scratch."

Richie, followed by Bartell and George Hayes, came panting across. "You all right, Ham?"

"I'm all right," Ham said, still holding Sophie to him. "Even the car's not too badly cracked."

"What was it? What happened?" asked Bartell.

"It was your tyres," said Ham, bitter and angry; and yet knowing his anger was stupid. "They're no bloody good for racing."

Far across the track some crows flapped across the fading sky with a mournful cry. Bartell looked towards them, but didn't see them. Nor had he seen the fear in the man standing beside the wrecked car. All he saw was the end of a dream. "I don't believe it," he said, but his voice held no more hope than that of the crows.

FOR THE next two or three weeks there was depression in the camp. Bartell went back to the States, taking with him some samples of what Ham considered good racing tyres. Richie continued to work on his car, but with the air of a man who expected it to burst into flames and be demolished for ever.

Then a cable arrived from Bartell, blunt and confident as the man himself had been when he had first come to England: *We can lick this. Keep working. Expect car ready for new year.* In the garage at Chalfont there was a great amount of enthusiastic activity.

Ham phoned Richie one day about a week before Christmas. "How's it coming?"

"The first engine arrives the day after tomorrow," Richie said. "And the body's just about finished. I reckon we'll have a rough job for you to drive some time between Christmas and New Year."

Ham had begun to train again, getting back into condition and taking off some of the surplus weight he had picked up since the accident at Le Mans. He began his training by going for long walks, testing his leg, and then he took to skipping. Close by the Rafferty home there was an old house that had once been a country club back in the thirties, and in its grounds there was a squash court. Ham cleaned it up and went across every day and banged the ball against the walls for half an hour or so.

He was working out there one day, in shorts and a thick sweater, when Janet knocked on the door in the back wall. "Sophie Bartell was on the phone. I told her you'd ring her back."

He wiped his face with a towel and they began to walk back to the house.

"Why don't you ask this Sophie Bartell down here?"

"You've never asked me to bring any of the others home."

"But this girl is different, isn't she?" She looked up at him, and when he smiled she said, "I'm a better mother than I thought. I'm even intuitive as to when my son is in love. What's she like, Ham?"

"She's a millionaire's daughter. I'm still trying to make up my mind whether that's a good or a bad thing."

"Millionaires are no different from anyone else," said Janet. "They just have more money."

"Ah, Mum." He laughed, loving her. "You can always reduce everything to such simplicities."

But two nights later he brought Sophie home for dinner. He didn't know that his mother had also invited some others. Taz was there, with some new girl, a brunette; and a young racing driver whom Ham knew, Peter Burghley, and his girl friend, Jackie Someone-or-other. Ham wondered if his mother had invited the others for her own or Sophie's protection.

Taz was a little stiff with Ham. "How's the Rugger going?" Ham asked, determined to be friendly.

Taz shrugged. "It fills in the winter."

Then they were interrupted by Peter Burghley: "I'm going to Florida for the Sebring next March, Ham. You've driven there. What's it like?"

"Not too tough as a course," Ham said, glad of the interruption. "The glare is the worst thing, if it's hot. And it's pretty bloody on brakes. You're on the brakes almost as much as you're on the pedal. Who are you driving for?"

"Maserati are sending over two cars." Peter Burghley was one of the younger drivers who had suddenly come to prominence in the last couple of years. He was small, thin, his blond hair too long. He was nervous, unable to relax, questing for something that was more than just excitement but to which he could give no name, and on certain days he could drive a car with all the skill and fire of a dedicated artist.

Janet called them in to dinner and Ham found himself seated between Sophie and Peter Burghley's girl friend, who said she was an out-of-work dancer. Her eyelids were thickly blued and she had twice as much mouth as she would wake up with in the morning. She was no older than Peter, but beside her he looked like a schoolboy out with Theda Bara.

The dinner went off smoothly; Janet was a good cook and she had excelled herself tonight.

"Can you cook, Sophie?" she said, when dinner was over and the girls were helping her get out the coffee cups.

"I couldn't contribute to anyone's cook book," Sophie said, "but I get by." Sophie smiled at the older woman. "If ever I get the chance to cook for Ham, you won't have to worry about him."

"Even before I knew you could cook, dear," said Janet, smiling at her, "I knew I shouldn't have to worry for him."

"Do you worry?" Sophie said, not smiling now.

Janet hesitated. "You mean when he's driving?"

Sophie nodded, and Janet looked at her for a moment without saying anything. Then: "If you fall in love with Ham, worry is one thing you must expect. Cars will always be your rival. My husband loved me, but he loved the cars just as much. And Ham is just like his father."

And, Sophie thought, I am just like my mother. I have fallen in love with a career man and there is absolutely nothing I can do about it. Nothing but surrender and hope for the best.

CHAPTER 6

EARLY on the morning of Christmas Eve Richie rang Ham. "It's all ready, sport. We worked till two o'clock this morning on it, just to get it finished."

Ham went up to Chalfont St. Giles, and saw the car, unpainted, unglamorous, streaked with grease, the bodywork still showing the signs of the panel beater's hammer. But Ham could see the beauty and speed in it. "You've got a car, sport," he said to Richie after he had walked round the car and peered into it.

"It's a smasher, eh?" George Hayes looked as if he had slept in the shed. "Richie's a flamin' genius."

"You don't have to tell him," said Richie, his face as bright as a fat sun in the cold gloom of the shed. "He's known it for years. So have I."

"She still looks a bit tough." Charlie Carter was a tall sheaf of a man who had hammered out the bodywork. "I'll do better when I'm not so rushed."

• The shed was full of good humour and camaraderie; these men had slaved together and produced something in which they had a common pride.

"Is she ready to go today?" Ham asked.

"I'd have been disappointed if you hadn't asked that," Richie said. "We're all set to go to Silverstone. I'd have driven the bloody thing myself if you hadn't come along. Stone the crows, I'm happy."

Two hours later he was, if anything, even happier. Ham had taken the car round Silverstone and come back into the pits with his thumb and forefinger locked in the gesture of approval. He had got out of the car and had slapped each of the men on the back.

"You can write to the Jaguar people and tell them you've given them a car to go with their engine. I touched a hundred and forty going down Hangar Straight and she sat there as if on a string."

"Anything wrong with her?" Richie said.

"Your gears are a bit slow between first and second. And there's a tendency to understeer when you're going into a corner. I think the trouble is you've got a better rear end than a front. You'll have to even that up. And the brakes judder a bit."

"All those can be fixed," Richie said. "What about comfort?"

"Personally, I'd like the steering-column sloped even a bit more. When it comes to the actual race, put in a three-spoke steering-wheel, will you? You know how I like to hold the wheel, with my thumbs hooked over the spokes. And a shorter gear handle. I found that one a bit high. Couple of times I felt as if I was trying to scratch my armpit."

"Gee, I didn't know a driver had to be so fussy about small things," George Hayes said.

"They aren't small things," said Richie. "A thousand miles of scratching your armpit can be a bit tiring. Okay, Ham, we'll fix all those. We'll give it another go in two weeks." He looked up, his face suddenly sober. "I'm glad you like it, sport."

Ham nodded, all at once aware that Richie was an old and loved friend. "We'll show 'em, chum. We'll really show 'em."

They drove back to Chalfont, and were putting the car away in the shed when suddenly Richie stopped and looked round at the others. "What are we gunna call it?"

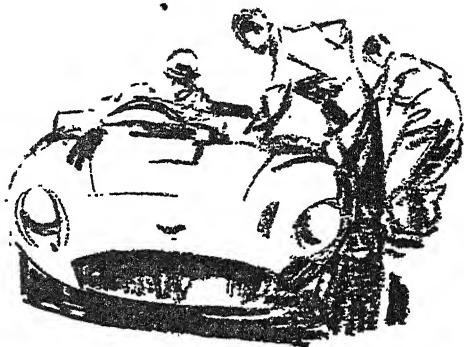
"The Launder?" suggested Ham.

"How about some Australian name?" George said. "Something like the Boomerang or the Kangaroo?"

But Richie was staring at the sign outside the pub on the village green.

"Merlin's Cave," he said.
"Merlin . . . Merlin was a wizard. That's the name for it—the Wizard. A merlin's a falcon, too. What about it? A car with magic as well as speed."

"He's more than a genius," said George, admiration bursting his face apart. "He's a flamin' poet, too."



Charlie Carter and George went home, promised a bonus for next Christmas from the profits from the Wizard's sales, and Ham and Richie went down to the Merlin's Cave to drink to the car's success. And over their beers Richie said, "Once we've got this car started on the market and Bartell's introduced his tyres, what are you gunna do? Are you gunna sign up with a works team again?"

Ham tasted his beer. "I don't know, to tell you the truth. I've been thinking of retiring. You know any old ladies who want a chauffeur?"

"That was what I was leading up to," Richie said and stroked the scar on his head. "How'd you like to come in as a partner with me on the——" He grinned to himself, as if embarrassed at being the maker of a car that deserved a name. "On the Wizard?"

Ham said nothing for a while. Then: "I'm tempted, and I appreciate your offer," Ham said. "Can I think about it?"

"Take your time."

That night Ham went to London to see Sophie, as he had practically every night during the past month. Each had become part of the pattern of the other. And that night, for the first time, she asked him directly about the other women in his life.

"Did you ever love any of them?"

"No. They didn't mean anything. There just had to be someone there, that was all. At the end of a race, you needed someone to distract you, to take your mind off it."

"There must have been dozens," she said, her hand closed over his, claiming him. "I don't want to know if there were. But you must have at

least liked one or two," she said, torturing herself, being a woman in love.

"Of course I liked one or two of them," he said. "But as soon as I found myself liking them too much, that was the end of it. I'd seen how some of the other drivers' wives suffered. I didn't want any girl suffering like that over me. It was enough to know that my mother worried about me."

"What about me now?" she said, and he realized he had said the wrong thing.

"This will be the last season. I promise you."

"If you do give up racing, what will you do?"

"Richie asked me that today," he said quietly. "I drove the new car today. It's good. He wants me to be a partner with him, if we do all right in the Mille Miglia. He's calling it the Wizard."

"Is that what you'd like to do? Make cars here in England?"

He noticed how the question had been phrased: *here in England?* And now he knew one of the reasons why he had asked Richie for time before making his decision. "Come on," he said roughly, still making a joke of everything. "It's time we were getting back to Stoke Poges. Tomorrow's Christmas."

She felt angry at him for dodging the issues that meant so much to her. She wasn't hurt; that she could have taken: pain was part of the pleasure of love. But anger contributed nothing to love; and she was bitterly angry at him now. The cars *were* her rivals, and suddenly she was angry at them, too.

"You're not going to make a fool of me!" she burst out.

He turned, his face blank with surprise. "A fool of you? What on earth are you talking about?" Then abruptly he took her in his arms. "Sophie, I don't know what you're talking about. But one thing I do know. I love you! You understand that? I love you, and I'll never make a fool of you or hurt you in any way!"

Then he pulled her to him and kissed her hard. Her anger was still there, but there was nothing she could do about it. She knew now that it was the power of her own love, and not Ham, that would make a fool of her.

It snowed during the night. Ham woke in the morning and looked out and saw the snow thick on the window-sill. He got out of bed and

went to the window. The garden was a museum of white abstract sculpture. A white Christmas makes it perfect, Ham thought.

When he went downstairs to put his presents at the foot of the Christmas tree Taz was arranging some presents of his own. In their pyjamas and dressing-gowns, the two brothers now looked remarkably alike. Taz would never be as heavy as Ham, and there was more nervous energy in him; but otherwise he was just a fined-down and more handsome copy of Ham.

"Merry Christmas," Ham said. They had seen little of each other. Ham had been staying up in town at the flat most of the time, and on those occasions when he had come down to stay at Stoke Poges, Taz had always found an excuse to be away.

"Merry Christmas," Taz said. "I took Mother a cup of tea. She said you had brought Sophie back with you last night."

Then he said, smiling, "You always did have a sharp eye for a good-looking girl."

"Your own's not so bad," said Ham.

The two brothers were searching for the frayed ends of the cord that had once bound them. Then Janet came into the room. "Isn't it wonderful it has snowed? Everything's for a perfect Christmas. And boys. Be nice to your grandfather, just for today. Ask him about his stocks and shares or something."

They both kissed her, and Taz said, "We'll ask him about that Christmas at Poona."

"You asked him about that last year," Ham said.

"And the year before," said Taz, laughing now, all his stiffness gone. "He'll always tell you the story, though."

Then Sophie came downstairs, her face radiant. "A white Christmas! Oh, what a hostess England is!" She had brought presents with her, even one for Taz.

Ham explained to Sophie that he and Taz always took their mother to Mass on Christmas Day, and she said, "I'll come, too, if I may."

They went to Mass in Slough and then they drove back to Stoke Poges, and at midday Brigadier Allday drove over from Iver.

"Merry Christmas, Miss Bartell," he said when he had been introduced to Sophie. She was wearing black tapered slacks and a scarlet sweater. The world had gone to the dogs, he decided, the day women went into

trousers. "American, eh?" he said stiffly. "I worked with an American during the war. Colonel Nevin. From Oshkosh."

"He was pulling your leg, Father," said Janet. "Oshkosh is in Russia."

"Oshkosh is in the State of Wisconsin," said her father. "I looked it up on the map."

"I've never even been to Oshkosh," said Sophie, smiling at Allday. "Ham tells me you spent a lot of time out in India. I've always wanted to go there. I once had to research a story on what the British had done in India."

"What was your opinion?" said Allday, ready for an argument.

"Oh, I thought you had done a fine job," said Sophie. "A better job than a lot of people give you credit for."

Allday smiled and stopped rubbing his nose. "Miss Bartell, may I say that you are the first woman I have ever met who looks graceful and womanly in trousers?" He beamed at her. Sophie had just been admitted to the British Empire. "Well, Janet, do we open our presents? What are we waiting for?"

Ham had bought Sophie a gold compact and a book of photographs of London; she gave him a gold wrist-watch. "I noticed you never wear one. I'm surprised you're always so punctual."

"I had one, but it was smashed at Le Mans. I just never got round to buying another."

"Don't smash that one," she said softly and kissed him.

At half past twelve the phone rang. "Hello, Rafferty," said Bartell. "Is Sophie there with you?"

Sophie took the phone from Ham. "Dad! Where are you?"

"I'm in London," said Bartell. "At the airport. I rang your apartment, but there was no answer. Then I guessed maybe you were spending Christmas with Rafferty."

Sophie turned to explain to Ham where her father was, and he took the phone. "I'll come up and get you, Mr. Bartell. You're coming here for Christmas dinner."

"That sounds like an order, son," Bartell said.

"That's what it is. Today you're working for me."

Ham and Sophie drove up to London Airport. Driving back, Ham said, "How are the tyres coming along?"

"I've brought two sets over with me. But we don't talk business today." Bartell had planned the trip to England so that he could spend Christmas with Sophie, but emotionally he was too awkward to be able to tell her so without embarrassing both of them. "I brought you a present, Sophie. I got yours just before I left Akron." He displayed the thick dark overcoat he wore. "An English one, Rafferty. I'm the best-dressed man in Akron."

He had been carrying a large cardboard box as well as his bag. Now he handed the box to Sophie in the front seat. She opened it, filling the car with tissue paper.

"Dad! A mink stole!"

His bony, ugly face had almost crumbled with love and happiness. "You like it, Sophie? You like your father's taste?"

"Do I!" Sophie turned in her seat to lean over and kiss him.

Ham had never expected to see Bartell ill at ease and apprehensive about meeting anyone. But he was no longer the big tyre magnate; he was his daughter's father. When they arrived at Stoke Poges he got out of the car and stood bareheaded in the snow. "I hope I'm not intruding on your mother," he said. "An extra guest for Christmas dinner, right out of the blue."

But Janet put him at ease at once and he warmed to her immediately. He shook hands heartily with Taz, and turned and did the same with Allday. Ham suddenly realized that today Bartell was more father than he was millionaire and he was anxious to prove it.

"It's a long time since I had a real home-cooked Christmas dinner, you know? Back home in Akron I usually have it at my club. It isn't the same, somehow."

"But a club has its advantages, don't you agree?" said Allday.

"Sure, if you are lonely and have nowhere else to go," said Bartell, and the Brigadier, who belonged to the Army and Navy Club and the Carlton Club, almost had a stroke.

But a little while later Bartell said he liked to hunt and shoot, and Allday looked at him with new respect. "The deer shooting in Wisconsin's the best in the world," Bartell said.

"I knew a colonel from Wisconsin," said Allday. "Colonel Nevin from Oshkosh."

"Oshkosh? Sure, I've been through there plenty of times," said Bartell. "It's about seventy-five miles north of Milwaukee."

"That's correct," said Allday, all the chill gone from him. "What type of gun do you use?"

Dinner was a success, and Ham, full of turkey, pudding and contentment, looked at Sophie and tried to remember when he had felt as happy as today. After dinner they all went back to the living-room and sat round the fire. Allday sipped port and reminisced about Poona and the hill stations; Bartell told them about the time when he and his first six employees had had to picket the plant against the bailiffs. Each man listened to the other with interest and respect; and Ham and the others just sat and listened to the stories and enjoyed them.

Then Richie and Kitty Launder, who had been invited by Ham, arrived with their two children.

"Ham tell you about the car?" Richie said to Bartell.

"We haven't talked about anything like that yet," Bartell said, sprawled out in his chair. Then he looked at Ham. "I brought you over some new tyres. Maybe we can try them out tomorrow, eh?"

"Oh, Dad!" Sophie said. "Tomorrow is a holiday here in England—Boxing Day."

"I have to fly back home on Wednesday," Bartell said. "Business is business, eh, Brigadier?"

"I've never considered what my grandson does as business," said Allday, replete but not so stupefied as to surrender all his opinions.

"Well, I hope what Richie is doing is business," Kitty Launder said, pouring oil on troubled waters. "He spends enough time in that darned garage of his."

"I'm gunna be there for the next three months," Richie said. "We gotta build another car, besides the one we're already working on. It's no use taking just one car to Italy."

"You're going to make me go broke," said Bartell. "Two cars." But he waved a bony flag of a hand; he would have bought a fleet of cars today. "Okay, go ahead, build two cars. Maybe we can give the other one to Taz here to drive. Eh, Taz?"

"Thanks, Mr. Bartell. But I can't," Taz said, and Ham waited for him to explain. Taz looked at Ham as if he had read Ham's thoughts, at his mother, then back to Bartell.

"I've signed with the Bourne End team," he said. "I'm going to Brescia with them, as reserve driver for them in the Mille Miglia."

CHAPTER 7

NEXT DAY, Ham went up to Silverstone again to test the tyres Bartell had brought over with him. Richie had borrowed a Maserati that had been brought into his garage for servicing.

The countryside was still white, but the track was dry and free of snow; Ham drove slowly round to check that there was no ice on it. Then he opened up the Maserati, but not right up. He had gone two laps before he found he was lifting his foot from the pedal long before he usually did when he went into a corner. He went round again, cursing himself for his caution, trying to tell himself that he was afraid of skidding on some ice he might have missed on his exploratory lap. But he knew there was no ice at all on the tarmac. He had not been afraid when he had tried out the Wizard last week. But last week he had not been riding on Bartell tyres, and it was Bartell tyres that had caused the crash in the Jaguar.

On the fifth lap he forced himself to keep his foot down as he went into Copse Corner. He went round in a four-wheel drift; he reached the point where only power could pull him through the corner. The car screamed like a living thing, shuddering at the strain put on it. He put his foot down, waiting for the tyres to grip beneath him; he flexed his buttocks, as if trying to push the tyres deeper into the track. A good driver drove by the seat of his pants: every tremble, every shudder from the tyres, wheels, suspension, chassis and seat cushion was a message. There was a split moment when the car seemed to have no road at all beneath it; the edge of the track opened like a black flower of disaster. Then the tyres gripped, moaned sharply, and the car had gone through the corner. He felt cold sweat break out on him; but he had made it. He went round three more laps, throwing out the challenge each time, then drew into the pits.

"Well?" Bartell said.

"They still don't hold as well on corners as I'd like them to."

"Here's another thing." Richie had gone round the tyres, and now straightened up. "I think we could do with a higher pressure than you recommend. These tyres are pretty hot, and they shouldn't be. Not after only eight laps." Richie saw Sophie looking inquiringly at him. "I won't

go into the technical details, Sophie, but what it amounts to is this—if a tyre is under-inflated, its temperature goes up at high speeds. For instance, if you reduce a tyre's pressure from forty to thirty-five pounds a square inch, you raise the tyre's temperature by nearly fifteen degrees centigrade. Once a tyre gets too hot, the rubber compounds in it start to soften. It's only a matter of time then before the treads begin to fly off and the whole cover starts to disintegrate."

"That's right, make me nice and happy," said Sophie.

"You don't have to worry, girl," Bartell said. "By the time Ham has to race, I'll give him tyres that are perfect. Leave it to me, Sophie. Ham's got confidence in me, haven't you, Ham?"

Ham could only nod: the lie might have been too apparent if he had spoken.

He drove Bartell and Sophie back to London. Bartell said he wanted to write a report for his production manager and his technical men. So Ham drove him to the Dorchester. Then Ham and Sophie went for a walk in Hyde Park.

They walked silently through the snow, turning out of the park and walking down through the narrow, frozen-faced streets of Mayfair. She looked up at the houses with forced brightness.

"I love this city, you know. I go for walks during the day. I pass the houses with those blue plaques on them, the ones that say So-and-so lived here, and I salute them. I've saluted Keats and Dickens and Elizabeth Barrett Browning and Dr. Johnson. Wouldn't it be nice if some day they put up a plaque to you?" Then abruptly she stopped, clutching at his hand. "Oh no, it wouldn't! That would mean you were dead!" She stared up at him, her face pale. "Oh, darling, I do love you! Even when you make me worry so much."

"Worry? I haven't even begun racing yet."

"No. And I don't know how I'm going to bear it when you do. Oh, why couldn't I have fallen for a man in a grey flannel suit?"

A WEEK later Taz's name was among those announced for the England Rugger team against Wales. Ham phoned him and congratulated him. He hadn't spoken to Taz since Christmas, but talking over the phone was no way of discussing his brother's decision to start big-car racing next season. So they talked of the coming Rugger match and



then hung up, each aware that the other had had something else to say.

Bartell had gone back to the States. He had told Sophie that he had taken an apartment in New York. He said he wanted her to set up a home for them in New York, and he would fly east every week-end. She had hedged in her answer, but had hinted that she would like to stay on this side of the Atlantic till after the running of the Mille Miglia. But after thinking it over she had written her father that she might go back with him next time he came over. She also made a request. It was the first time she had asked her father for anything since she was a child.

In the next week Ham took the Wizard up to Silverstone again, but there was still something wrong with the front suspension and the car still had a tendency to understeer. The Wizard was taken back to the shed at Chalfont and Richie got to work again.

Ham took his mother and Sophie to see the Rugger International. Taz played a brilliant game and scored the winning try. After the game Ham and the others went down to the door of the dressing-room. Taz, still in his football togs, flushed with his success, came out to meet them. Strangers were coming up and congratulating Taz; four schoolboys thrust their autograph books under his nose. He was embarrassed, but he was enjoying it; he scrawled his signature in the autograph books with a self-conscious flourish.

Then one of the schoolboys turned away from Taz and pushed his book at Ham. "May I have your autograph, too, Mr. Rafferty? You *are* Ham Rafferty, the racing driver, aren't you, sir?"

"Yes," said Ham and had to restrain himself from patting the boy on the head. "Do you want me to sign on the same page as my brother?"

"Gosh, no, sir! A page for each of you."

He watched the boy glide away through the crowd, and when he turned back Sophie was smiling. "You looked so pleased when he asked for your autograph. Are you jealous of Taz?"

"No," he said and wasn't. "That will come later."

Taz was taking his girl out to a show in London, so Ham prepared to drive his mother back to Stoke Poges. She invited Sophie to stay the week-end, so first they drove up to South Kensington while Sophie picked up what things she needed. Ham and his mother sat in the car while Sophie went up to her flat.

"She's a nice girl, Ham. What's going to become of her?"

"What do you mean, what's going to become of her?"

"Don't be dense, Ham. You know what I mean."

He tapped his gloved fingers gently on the wheel of the car. "I'd like to ask her to marry me. But I don't know whether she would want to settle down here in England. And what can I do if I go to America?"

"Perhaps you could go and work for her father?"

"The man who married the boss's daughter? No, thanks."

"You'll have to do something about her soon. It's not fair to her, Ham. And it's not fair to yourself."

"I'll wait a little longer. Till after the Mille Miglia."

"That was what your father said, when I asked him when he was going to retire. After the Mille Miglia."

Then Sophie got into the car and said, "There was a letter from my father. I stopped to read it."

"Any news?" Ham said, starting the car.

"Yes," said Sophie. "He said he had written to you, too."

THE LETTER for Ham from Bartell was six lines and no more; he didn't overwork his stenographer. He said that he thought it would be a good idea if Ham came across to New York with Sophie at the end of February. It might be a good idea if Ham had a look at the Bartell plant in Akron. Yours sincerely, Joseph Bartell.

Ham told his mother what was in the letter. "That will be a nice trip," said Janet. "Especially the two of you going together."

Sunday morning Richie came down, and Ham went across with him to the Dog and Pot, the small pub nearby.

"I got a letter from Bartell yesterday," Ham said. "He wants me to go to the States for a couple of weeks. He wants me to have a look at the factory in Akron."

"It might be an idea," Richie said. "I think a word or two in the ear of his production men would be worth more than a year's reports to Bartell himself. The old man is a bit stubborn. He's never made racing tyres before, but he thinks he knows all about them."

Ham looked at him. "Have you some doubts about the tyres?"

Richie sipped his beer. "Now you ask me, yes. Have you?"

"All he keeps talking about is how good they are in the wet. Maybe they are. But what happens if it's dry and hot when I drive in the Mille Miglia? No matter how good a tyre is in the wet, it's not going to be much help if the cover peels off it when it's hot. I've got no confidence in his tyres. All the time I'm going round the track, I'm tensed up, as if I'm waiting for someone to kick me in the behind."

"It'll be a fine thing," said Richie, "if I produce a car capable of winning the Mille Miglia and it goes out half-way round because the tyres were no good. That's why I think you should go to the States. Find out who Bartell's top designer is. Then blow down his ear, hard. Well, I'd better be getting home. Can you come up on Wednesday? We oughta be ready to try the car out again."

Richie drove away in his Standard, and Ham, walking home, met Taz. "They told me you were over here," Taz said.

A pale sun had struggled through the clouds and was making a feeble effort to gild the day. Ham, feeling the cold after the warmth of the pub bar, suddenly longed for summer. "I'll be glad when we leave for Italy and the race," he said explosively, thinking of the valley of the Po, brown and hot under the sun. But Taz, who wasn't feeling the cold, said, "You don't mind me now—I mean, perhaps racing against you in the Mille Miglia?"

Ham stopped for a moment, searching for words. He realized that, more than anything, Taz wanted his approval. He put his hand on Taz's shoulder for a moment as he stepped aside to let Taz pass through the gate into the garden. "No," he forced himself to say. "But reserve drivers don't often get a go in the Mille Miglia. You know what regular

team drivers are like about the big races. I hope you won't be too disappointed if you don't get a start."

"I shan't," Taz said. "They've said they'll let me take one of the practice cars round the course. So I'll know something about it for next year." He stopped as he was about to open the front door and looked back over his shoulder at Ham. "I shan't be reserve driver next year. I've promised myself I'll be a regular driver in the Bourne End team or I'll be driving for someone else."

Ham couldn't resist it: "You've got it all mapped out?"

"Yes. That's the way it was with you and Dad, wasn't it?"

Ham couldn't deny it. "Yes," he said. "We had it all mapped out. There's just one thing, though."

Taz stopped, the door half open. "What's that?"

"You can never map out when you'll hang up your helmet," he said. "Dad didn't choose his time to call it quits. And I don't know yet when I'll hang up mine."

THAT NIGHT Ham drove Sophie home to London. "There's such a lot I want to show you in New York," she said.

"You planned this, didn't you?" he said.

"How do you mean, planned it?" she said, trying now to be inscrutable, realizing she had given her game away.

"Did you write to your father and suggest this trip for me?"

She hesitated. "Yes," she said at last.

"But why? Why did you want me to come to New York?"

"Oh, I just thought I'd like to see you in my background," she said lightly. "And you would like to go out to Akron, wouldn't you, and see the plant?"

"Yes," he said, "I'm very keen to go out to the plant. The tyres that come out of there mean a great deal to me."

"You sound just like Dad," said Sophie; but didn't look the slightest bit unhappy.

BARTELL, wrapped in his English overcoat, met them at Idlewild Airport.

"Hello, girl, how are you?" He kissed Sophie on her hair; he still did it as if she didn't belong to him. "I've got the apartment all fixed up for

us. You'll like it. Even got us a maid, girl named Deanna." Talking all the time, he ushered them into the car, a shining cream Cadillac. "I had this brought on from Akron. Give you some transport while you're here in New York. Let you experience some American comfort, stretch your legs without putting them into the engine."

Bartell was not Ham's idea of a good driver. He drove fast and with only one eye on the road, talking to them all the time. "I've got Ed Carlin up at the apartment. He flew in with me from Akron. I thought it would be a good thing for you to meet him, Ham, before we go out to the plant."

"Oh, Dad," Sophie said. "Have we got to talk business tonight? Ham's first night here? My first night home?"

Bartell saw he had made a mistake. "I'm sorry, girl, I didn't think—but I just can't brush Ed off tonight. He isn't one of the boys I pay to butter me up. He's my production chief."

"I'd like to meet him," Ham said, pressing Sophie's hand. "That's why I came over here."

"Is it?" Bartell asked. "I thought the main reason you came across was to be with Sophie."

Ham felt Sophie's hand slacken in his, waiting for his answer. "Yes," he said and felt the pressure of her hand again. "But I have to make a pretence of being here on business, haven't I?"

The Bartells' apartment was in a tall new building on a corner of Fifth Avenue in the Sixties. It was a penthouse apartment, and even Sophie was surprised at the sumptuousness of it. Bartell stood in the middle of it, his bony face fattened by pride. "You like it, girl?"

Sophie kissed him. "It's wonderful, Dad. I never dreamed home was like this."

He caught her meaning, but he wasn't offended. He smiled down at her, holding her hands in his. "I wanted the best, girl. I have an awful lot of years to make up."

Then Ed Carlin, a stout, balding man with bright, merry eyes and a deep voice, came in from the terrace and was introduced.

"You're better looking than your photo, Miss Bartell," he said. "Your father has it on his desk at the plant. We all find excuses to go in and look at it. Your father thinks we want to see him."

Bartell chuckled. "They all think I don't know it, too."

They went to Twenty-One for dinner. Ed Carlin pointed out several celebrities to Ham. "You'll be a celebrity in a week or two yourself," he said. "Have you told him yet, Joe?"

"No," said Bartell and looked at Ham. "I was going to keep this till later, but I guess now's as good a time as any. We have entered you in the Sebring Twelve-Hour. You are going to win it, too, and be a celebrity like Ed says."

Ham held back till the waiter had gone away. It gave him time to control his temper. Then he said quietly, "You don't think you should have asked me before you put my name down for it?"

"Hell, there wasn't time," said Bartell, beginning to eat. "Why, what's the matter? We had to get you a car. By the time we got that fixed, it was time to send in your name before the entries closed. I guessed you wouldn't mind. You'll win this, Ham. We've got you a Ferrari, one that belongs to a friend of Ed's."

Ham looked at Sophie, but she hurriedly said, "Darling, I had nothing to do with this! I'm on your side. I think the least Dad could have done was to ask you before he arranged it all."

"I told you, there wasn't time," Bartell put down his fork. "What's the matter, Rafferty? Don't you want to drive at Sebring? You're working for me, remember. You didn't nominate what races you drove in when you drove for that works team, I bet."

"I've got nothing against driving there," Ham said slowly. "But you signed me for two races, remember? The Mille Miglia and the Le Mans. Next time you want to enter me for a race, pay me the compliment of telling me about it first."

For a moment it looked as if Bartell were going to bluster it out: he was the boss, and nobody was going to talk to him like that! Then he looked at Sophie, saw the disapproval in her face, and in that moment capitulated.

"All right, Rafferty. Ham. I apologize. I didn't think you'd take it like this. I thought I was doing a good thing. We thought we could get you some publicity in the newspapers and on television—maybe the Ed Sullivan show. Nobody over here knows any race drivers."

Ham saw the anxiety in Bartell's face. He felt no resentment now, and he weakened. "All right," he said, "I'll drive at Sebring for you. But what if I don't win?"

"Then don't trouble to cross the line," said Carlin. "Just turn west somewhere along the track and keep driving."

HAM FLEW out to Akron with Bartell and Carlin. He was shown through the plant by Bartell, and then managed to get himself closeted with Carlin for half an hour. He talked earnestly and lucidly, and at the end of it Ed Carlin said, "We should have had you over here three months ago, Ham. The Old Man is stubborn. He knows tyres, but he knows nothing about racing tyres."

"Will you be able to do something now?" Ham said.

"I can handle him," Carlin said.

Ham went back to New York. A week later he and Sophie flew down to Florida. Bartell, who had gone direct from Akron, met them at Tampa with Morrie Fishberg, the owner of the Ferrari which Ham was to drive. Fishberg was a fat, smiling little man in horn-rimmed glasses; he looked like a happy owl. And he was most happy, he told Ham, when he was round motor-cars.

Ham's co-driver in the race was to be Wally Heckberg, who had worked his way up from midget-car and stock-car meets and had driven for Fishberg at Indianapolis and Watkins Glen. He was one of the band of grease-stained, wind-weathered gipsies who, by luck, skill, perseverance and plain guts, make a living out of racing cars in the United States, working their way from track to track, from small town to small town, from state fair to state fair, always dreaming of the big time; and some of them, like Wally Heckberg, making it while they were still young enough to enjoy it. Wally was in his late twenties, a tall, thin-hipped man but with the shoulders of a middleweight wrestler. He had rather tired-looking eyes, and a habit of hesitating before he spoke, and he chewed gum constantly.

Their first day out at the



track Peter Burghley came up, his thin face pink with sunburn. "Ham, why didn't you stay home? I've been telling these Yanks how I was going to win this. Now I've got to beat you, too." Peter had already met Wally; he winked at him and looked back at Ham. "How's Sophie?"

"She's fine," Ham said.

When Peter had gone Wally looked after him. "How good is he, Ham? It's hard to tell under all that school-kid act of his."

"One of these days he's going to be a great racing driver. He's the sort of kid who worries old coves like me stiff. Because they are the ones who, some day, are going to make us veterans retire."

The night before the race Ham went to bed early, but sleep didn't come easily; he drove the race in his mind long before the flag fell.

As it happened, once he was in the Ferrari all his fear disappeared. But he wasn't consoled; he knew now that this was no real test. The Sebring course, with its flat track and artificial bends that kept speeds well down, was as good as any for a man who had crashed to make his come back. It was nothing like the test that the Mille Miglia or Le Mans would be.

Ham got the Ferrari away at the head of the field, using its tremendous acceleration to the fullest effect; but when he came out of the first corner he saw in his mirror that Peter Burghley was right behind him in his Maserati. He settled down in his seat, chewing his gum steadily, sitting back in his old relaxed style, driving with arms almost at full stretch. He was ready to give Peter Burghley a lesson in racing.

Ham and Wally had agreed to drive in three-hour stretches, to avoid fatigue from the heat and eyestrain from the glare. Ham still held the lead at the end of about two and a half hours, with Peter close on his tail; at times Ham felt he was pulling Peter along. He glanced at his watch: twenty minutes to go. Now was the time to increase his lead, to give Wally something to get his teeth into as he came out for his first stretch of driving. Ham had no idea how good Peter's co-driver was, and there was always the chance, too, that time would be lost at the pits during the change-over. The Sebring was always a tough race on brakes and he knew the value of the extra few seconds for a quick look at the brakes when the wheels were being changed. He began to take corners a little faster, braking later, drifting more; coming out of the corners he used the maximum revs on each gear, getting everything he

could out of the Ferrari's acceleration. And Peter tried to match him.

Coming down a straight Peter found some extra power and brought the Maserati up alongside the Ferrari; they went down towards the bend together, with Peter on the outside. Ham left his braking till the last moment, then he began to tread on the pedal, pumping hard. He saw the Maserati go ahead of him, and he knew the worst before it happened. He saw Peter suddenly begin to brake, realizing he had left it too late, and begin to fight the wheel. Ham went through on the inside, scraping the wheel of the Maserati as it slewed towards him; then he was having his own battle, taking the Ferrari through the corner. Then he was accelerating away again and there was no sign of the Maserati in his mirror.

Next time round he saw the crowd thick on the outside of the bend beyond the straw bales, hiding the car but unable to hide the black tree of smoke.

CHAPTER 8

HAM AND Sophie flew back to England a week after the Sebring. It had been a bad week for both of them. In Ham's baggage were some of Peter Burghley's personal belongings to be taken back to his parents.

It was a quiet journey for Ham and Sophie, of few words and fitful sleep. And then, as they came in from the grey Atlantic, Ham said, "I think we should get married."

She should have been excited, delirious with happiness, but all she could do was press his hand and smile weakly at him. "When?"

"As soon as you like."

"And where do we live?" she said, afraid of the cars, aware that the plane every moment was bringing her closer to them.

"You once said you liked England."

"Would you go on racing? I couldn't take that, Ham."

"I don't *want* to go on racing," he said, admitting part of the truth for the first time. "But what do I do for a living if we go back to America? I'm not trained for anything." Then he told her about Richie's offer to go in with him as partner. "That, I could do. But what demand is there in the States for the hand-made sports car? Besides, it's far cheaper to make the sort of car we want to make in England."

"Well, couldn't Dad find a job for you?"

"No, darling. The last thing I want is to go to work for your father. I still want a measure of independence. I'd have none if I went to work for him full time."

"Well, you'll have to do something. But what? Hadn't you ever made any plans or were you just going on till——" She stopped.

"Oh, I'd thought about it long before I met you. Every man, unless he's a fool, thinks about it if he's in a job like mine. The racing driver, the matador, the professional cricketer, your baseballers, fighters. He has to start his life all over again, some time when he gets into his thirties. I wanted to go on for a few more years, put some money aside and look round for a business, a car agency, or something like that. After I've driven the Mille Miglia and Le Mans, I'll have enough to do that."

"I think I could get Dad to release you from your contract."

"And what would we use for money to get married on?" He turned away for a moment, then looked back at her. "I shouldn't have asked you, darling. I'm sorry. Forget it."

"I won't forget it!" she said; the tiredness dropped from her face, and her eyes blazed. "We're going to be married, you understand? I don't care how we work it out, we're going to be married!"

But even as she said it, she knew she was not just accepting him: she was defying the cars, trying to bury her fear in a fierce passion of love.

Taz met them at London Airport in the Jensen. They drove Sophie up to her flat, Ham said he would see her the next day, then he and Taz drove back to Stoke Poges.

"We're engaged," he said, as they started off.

Taz congratulated him. "The second time I saw you with Sophie, I somehow knew you'd marry her. When are you going to be married?"

"We haven't talked about that yet," Ham said. "We're talking about where we'll live."

Taz looked at him in surprise. "You're not thinking of going to live in America?"

"People do live there, you know."

"Oh, I know. What I meant was, look how far away you'll be from things. What racing do they have there?"

"If I'm retired," Ham said, looking straight ahead, "what does it matter what I do the rest of the time?"

"Then you *are* retiring?" The Jensen's speed increased a little: Taz had put his foot down involuntarily.

"You're expecting me to, aren't you?"

"Look, Ham. I'm trying to stand on my own two feet now and I'm not expecting anything of you."

Ham said nothing for a while, then at last: "How's Mum?"

"She's all right." Then he said, and it was obvious he had been wanting to say it ever since Ham had got off the plane: "That was shattering about Peter. It upset Mother a lot."

"It upset me," Ham said. "In a way I was responsible for his going off the track."

"That's bloody silly. Nobody is responsible for anyone else going off the track, not unless he deliberately pushes him. You're not that sort of driver. What did happen?"

Ham told him. "If he hadn't tried to beat me into that corner, he'd still be alive."

"Then it wasn't your fault. Peter had those lapses, you know that. He could drive as well as anyone for lap after lap, and then all of a sudden he'd have one of those mad moments of his."

"I'd better go and see his people, I suppose," said Ham. "That's always the part I hate. It's bloody murder."

"Mother's already written to Peter's people. She always does that. I think she's written to the relatives of every driver who has been killed since Dad was. It's as if she feels she belongs to some club."

Ham could feel the extra warmth of his mother's welcome; it was almost as if he had come back from a war. When he told her about his engagement, she kissed him again and burst into tears. It was the first time he had seen her cry since his father's death.

"Look, this is supposed to be a happy occasion!"

"I am happy," she said. "Why didn't you bring Sophie back here with you so I could weep over her, too? You men. You've never got any appreciation of the wonderful moments in a woman's life. We could have had a nice big cry together." Then she smiled, wiping her eyes. "Of course I'm happy. When is the wedding?"

"That's the first thing everyone asks," he said. "Don't rush me. It's taken me years to get engaged."

That night, while they sat in front of the fire, Ham told Taz about the

trip to America. "Old Man Bartell got what he wanted from me. Publicity. After we'd won the Sebring, they had me on a television show. One of those bright happy announcers kept laughing in my face and asking me questions about cars that a ten-year-old kid wouldn't have asked. They told me afterwards ten million people look at the programme, so maybe one or two of them caught my name."

"I was on the B.B.C. last Saturday," Taz said. "You heard about the tries I got in the Rugger matches against France and Scotland. They had me on 'In Town Tonight.' With the Champion of Champions from Cruft's Dog Show. The beast tried to bite me just as I went on."

"You're getting your share of glory, then."

"Who wants glory?" said Taz, with all the bitterness of youth.

"What do you want?"

Taz stared into the fire. "I don't know. It's hard to put it into words without sounding like a poet trying to write a pamphlet. I want—well, I want what you've had for the past ten or twelve years. I want what you feel when you're waiting for the flag to come down. I don't know, perhaps it's what knights of old used to feel. Whatever it is, it's something that's dying out in this world. What I'm trying to say is, I want that feeling of being alone against whatever it is that's sent to test a man. I think you get it behind the wheel of a racing car."

"Now you know why I haven't wanted to retire."

"I know." Taz nodded his head. "And I don't blame you now. I just hope you understand how it is with me."

"What about Mum?"

"We haven't talked about it. It's no use trying to explain it to her. She wouldn't understand."

"I think she might," Ham said slowly. "If she would only let herself understand. But the trouble is, she can never forget that a woman always has to stand and wait."

"What about Sophie?"

"She feels the same as Mum. She doesn't even want me to race in the Mille Miglia. Not after seeing Peter killed."

"Will you race in it?"

Ham looked across at him. "I've got to. The time to retire is not right after you've seen someone, a friend, killed. The time to retire is when you decide it yourself."

Next morning Ham went up to see Richie and test the Wizard. Work had now begun on the second car to be taken to Italy; another mechanic had been taken on and part of the front garage had been requisitioned as another workshop.

"Don't work yourself into hospital," Ham said to Richie. "I'll need you in Italy. We haven't talked about a passenger for the Mille Miglia, but I'm hoping it will be you. I'll need someone to navigate."

"I just took it for granted that I'd be the bloke. Come on in and have a look at the car. I think we've solved that understeer trouble. Can you try her out?" Ham nodded. "How about the tyres? You bring any new ones back with you?"

"No. But I think we might have some improvement now. I had a chance to talk to Bartell's production chief. But it looks as if we shan't get them till we get to Italy."

"That's a bloody shame. What happens if they still turn out to be no good?"

Ham said nothing, but turned away.

Charlie waved a huge hand. "Well, how does she look?" There was no mistaking the pride in his eyes as he nodded towards the car.

All the roughness had been smoothed out of its bodywork. It had been painted British racing green; it had the sleekness of a green teardrop. Ham knew how difficult it was to combine good æsthetic design with good engineering design; the two things were not necessarily compatible. Some of the best racing cars, as far as road holding and aerodynamic design had been concerned, had been ugly. Ham knew that, when he first drove this car into the Piazza Vittoria in Brescia, he would feel as much pride in the Wizard as was now so evident on Charlie Carter's big red face.

Ham had now taken to carrying his gear in the boot of the Jensen, so they left at once for Silverstone. Bartell had written Richie to buy and outfit a transporter truck, but delivery of it wasn't expected until just before they were to leave for Italy. So they borrowed a truck from the coal dealer, the Wizard was loaded aboard and they all set off for Silverstone.

Ham did ten laps on the course. He didn't need any more; when he brought the car in he knew they had a good one. "She'll do just as she is. Don't touch her."

Richie, bundled up in a duffel coat, jumped up and down. "It's up to you now, sport. When we come back to England at the end of April, we want the Mille Miglia under our belt."

"It's in the bag," said George Hayes.

"I'll have to find a bookie in Brescia," said Charlie. "I'll invest a couple of shillings on the combination of the Wizard and Rafferty. I might even be rash and go as far as five bob."

Ham had no words to answer their faith and hope in him. He was afraid again, because he knew now there would be no safety limit for him on the whole thousand miles of the Italian roads. He would have to drive to the absolute limit and these men, not knowing his secret, would be expecting no less of him.

He went back to Stoke Poges, bathed and changed and started to leave for South Kensington. His mother followed him to the door.

"Bring Sophie back with you. Now she's going to be my daughter-in-law I want to give her a proper welcome into the family."

"I'll bring her down tomorrow. I'll stay at the flat tonight. We have to go and buy the ring in the morning."

"Is Sophie going to Italy with you?"

"I took it for granted that she was."

"Am I coming?" He realized with a shock that she had never asked him that before.

"Of course. You want to, don't you?"

"I should like to. After all, I'll have a double interest in it this time, if the Bourne End team decides to start Taz."

He hesitated, then he said, "Have you reconciled yourself to Taz driving?"

In the pale silver light of the late afternoon she looked suddenly old. "There's not much else I can do, is there?" she said, and her voice trembled.

CHAPTER 9

IN THE middle of April, Bartell, Ed Carlin and another tyre engineer, Bill Sitkin, arrived with the new racing tyres. There was no time for Ham to test them at Silverstone; and in any case a test of them now would have achieved little. The Mille Miglia was less than a fortnight

away and if the tyres did still have faults there would be no time to remedy them.

Ed Carlin took Ham aside. "I think they're okay. We had to put Joe's ideas into them, too. The non-skid tread—he's really got something there—and what the rest of us reckon is its best selling point, the amount of life in it. What you want is a tyre that'll last long enough to get you round the Mille Miglia. I think that's what we're giving you, Ham. I hope so, anyway."

"So do I," said Ham. "And thanks."

Ham and Carlin rejoined the others. Bartell looked up as they came in. He was holding Sophie's hand. "Funny how a ring on a woman's finger makes her look different. I should abuse you, Ham, for taking her away from me, just after I've found her again. But I can see how happy she is. And that's what I want most of all. Right after you've won the Mille Miglia, we'll have the biggest wedding Brescia has ever seen."

Bartell, Carlin and Sitkin went up to Chalfont St. Giles to see the Wizard, and almost overwhelmed Richie with their enthusiasm. Even Bartell, who up to now had looked on it only as a vehicle to carry his tyres, walked round and round it like a man seeing a car for the first time in his life. "Say, this is really something! You know, if you go into production, I might come in with you as a partner. I told you once, I don't like to back failures. But I don't think this thing is going to be a failure."

Richie looked at Ham, then back at Bartell. "We'll talk about it after the race, Joe. I could do with a partner or two."

The new transporter had arrived, a giant closed van painted British racing green like the two Wizards. Richie had already written ahead to Brescia and been promised the use of a small garage on the outskirts of the town.

Richie, Charlie and George left two days later for Brescia. When the big transporter pulled out from the garage at Chalfont the drinkers came out of the Merlin's Cave and toasted its departure. Richie stood on the running-board in a drizzle of rain and thanked them all for their good wishes, said he was bloody glad to be leaving the bloody English climate, and he would be back with the Mille Miglia prize under his belt. Then he drove off to a mixture of cheers, laughs and good-natured boos. Three

days later Ham flew over with Bartell, Carlin and Sitkin. Sophie, Janet and Kitty Launder were not flying over till the following Monday.

Taz had gone to Italy soon after winning the British Empire Trophy at Oulton Park. The Bourne End team had taken its cars to the Monza circuit north of Milan for some development tests before going on to Brescia. After his win at Oulton Park there had been talk that Taz might replace one of the other drivers in the Mille Miglia. It was a promotion at which Janet felt no joy. She had gone to Mass, and for the first time in her life, had prayed that one of her sons would not even be able to start.

HAM AND the others arrived in Brescia to a burst of beautiful weather.

It was not really hot, but after the cold drizzle of England it was almost like a heat wave. Richie, when he met them, was smiling. "This is the climate! These bloody Italians know where to live!"

Bartell, Carlin and Sitkin, and the women when they were due, were booked in at an hotel in the centre of Brescia. But Richie had booked himself and Ham into a small *pensione* just outside the town. Charlie and George were sleeping on stretchers in the transporter.

"I thought it better if we stayed out of town," Richie said as he drove Ham out to the *pensione*. "We'll want some sleep the last few nights, and you don't get it right in town. This old codger, Lupi, knew your old man."

Giulio Lupi was a barrel of a man who reeked of wine, garlic and *bonhomie*. When he learned that Ham spoke Italian he shouted, "I can talk to you! This little tub"—he gestured at Richie—"all he can say is *buon giorno*. It is a start, but it becomes monotonous. So you are the son of Rafferty, eh? What a driver! Only Nuvolari could be sure of beating him. Oh, we shall talk, we shall talk!"

Taz arrived just as they were finishing supper. Ham introduced him to Lupi, and he was embraced with a bellow. "Two sons of Rafferty, here in my house!"

After Lupi had gone off, Taz asked Ham, "Have you been round the course yet?"

"We leave first thing tomorrow morning. About five-thirty, so we'll have a couple of clear hours on the road."

"I'm going round tomorrow, too."

"Does it look as if you'll be driving?"

Taz shook his head, disappointment plain on his face. "You know what it's like in a racing team. Seniority counts."

"In five or ten years' time, when you're the senior driver, you'll feel just the same." Senior drivers did not gain their seniority on their age and their length of service; they were the senior drivers because they were the best drivers.

"I suppose so," Taz said. "But it's a bit frustrating."

"It will please Mum," Ham said quietly.

Taz nodded, not prepared to argue. "Well, I may see you tomorrow, somewhere round the course."

That night Ham went with Bartell to meet the Bartelli family. They were the sort of family with whom a stranger could not long dodge adoption. Wine glimmered rubily; cakes and fruit came, disappeared and came again. All the talk was of the race, the race to come and all the races that had been. Papa Bartelli brought out a stack of yellowed newspapers that told the story of past Mille Miglia races. He pointed to pictures of Caracciola, Varzi, Nuvolari, Arcangeli and Pat Rafferty. One of the younger Bartellis brought out today's copies of the Milan newspapers. Ham was featured; "L'Aquila" was back. And with the Italians' sense of the romantic and the morbid, all the stories said that, if an Italian couldn't win the race, it would be fitting and proper if L'Aquila won the race that had killed his father.

Ham left early and went back to the *pensione* and to bed. At five o'clock Richie woke him. "Righto, sport. We're going for a drive round Italy."

It was Sunday and people were already on their way to early Mass. Two *carabinieri* saluted Ham and Richie as they went past and one stopped for a moment and patted the green shell of the Wizard.

"*Bella macchina.*" He smiled to himself, turned, and followed his companion.

Ham and Richie were using the spare car today. The new Bartell tyres had been fitted, and the car had been prepared and checked the night before. Richie had equipped himself with a thick note-book and two fountain-pens, an 8 mm. cine-camera and a dozen rolls of film. "I'm leaving nothing to chance," he had told Bartell. "We'll get the films printed in Milan as soon as we get back, and we'll run 'em off as many

times as Ham needs 'em to memorize blind corners, bridges, humps in the road. And the day of the race I'll have the whole route typed out on rollers from notes I'll make in this note-book."

Ham and Richie got away a little after five-thirty. The roads had not been cleared for practice; the racing drivers had to take their chances today with the ordinary drivers, and vice versa. There were just over six hundred entrants for this year's Mille Miglia and it seemed that most of them had chosen today to make themselves familiar with the course. It also seemed that half the wheeled population of Italy had also decided to come out for a jaunt on the Mille Miglia route. Several times Ham was challenged by middle-aged sports in tiny Fiats; and every motor-scooter they passed was looking for a race. Beyond Ancona the driver of an ancient bus hogged the road ahead of them at fifty miles an hour, daring them to try to pass him.

At last Ham slipped the Wizard through on a corner, grazing the side of the bus as he did so. The bus driver waved to them as they sped away; he had led a Mille Miglia competitor for five miles and he had had his moment of glory. When Richie looked back, the bus driver was turning the bus round to go back and deliver those passengers who had been overcarried.

The Italians, police and public alike, had an outlook all their own towards motor-racing and the men who indulged in it. No one resented the drivers who came blazing down the middle of the road, blaring their horns and demanding right of way. Ham flicked the Wizard through the traffic and the Italians made way and cheered him on. He went into a village at eighty miles an hour; a policeman held up traffic coming out of a side street and saluted Ham as he went by. At seventy the car was squeezed between two donkey-drawn carts; a glittering sea of cyclists opened before it and it went through with hardly a touch of the foot on the brake.

Ham stopped the car often, reversed it and went back to repeat a corner that looked particularly difficult or dangerous. One was a blind corner in a village; he made six attempts at it before he was satisfied at the line and the maximum speed at which he could take it. The whole village turned out to watch the performance, all standing suicidally close to the corner as Ham tore into it. When he was finally satisfied with what he could do on the corner and was on his way again, the

villagers raced down the street after them cheering and waving. Then they turned round and raced back up the street again to the corner. Another car had arrived and was making its experiments.

"I love 'em!" Richie shouted. "Stone the crows, they know how to enjoy themselves."

They stayed the night in Rome. While Richie remained at the hotel and tried to get some order into the notes he had taken, Ham went out to buy a present for Sophie. He was tired and his leg had begun to ache again; it was a long time since he had driven so far in one day. Yet next Sunday he would have to drive twice this distance and at considerably greater speed; by this time next Sunday evening his leg might be a limb of fire. Only then did he realize that today was Sunday and that the shops were shut. He wandered on, trying to walk the stiffness out of his legs, and finally he turned round and went back to the hotel.

Richie, already in bed, said, "Bartell asked me again yesterday about coming in with me as partner. I put him off till we get back. I wanted your answer first."

Ham was suddenly so tired that he was in no condition to give answers to anything; and yet Richie was, in a way, asking him to decide which way the rest of his life would go. He shut his eyes tight, and there in the darkness he saw the clear image of Sophie.

"You'd better forget about me," he said. "Take Joe in as your partner."

In the darkness he sensed Richie's disappointment, but there was nothing he could do about it. Though they had been to no altar, he was already wedded to Sophie.

CHAPTER 10

NEXT MORNING Richie looked tired, and he was quiet. They left Rome at daybreak and headed north for Florence. Now there was weekday traffic on the roads; they had to blast their way past trucks. They went through the same routine again of stopping and going into a corner three or four times, getting to know its minimum margin of safety. Richie now had pages and pages of notes, and had already shot off ten reels of film and was beginning to wonder if he would need to buy more before they got back to Brescia.

They went through Florence, and up the Futa Pass, Ham working

hard on the wheel as he pulled the car round the curves of the steep, winding road. Several times he looked at Richie and nodded appreciatively. This was the first opportunity they had had to test the car on actual mountain runs, and it had gone well. If the tyres held in the race, then it looked as if everything would depend only on the driver.

Then, on the Raticosa Pass, Ham began to slow.

"What's the matter?" Richie said and looked anxiously at the dials on the instrument panel. "She missing?"

Ham shook his head. "I'm looking for something."

Then just beyond a sharp curve, where the road seemed no more than an impertinent foolhardy slash in the steep fall of the mountain, he brought the Wizard to a halt. He got out and walked slowly back along the road and stood looking at something. Richie watched him for a moment, then he, too, got out of the car and walked back. They stood looking at the large whitewashed stone, like a headstone, dusty now but with its lettering still readable:

PATRICK RAFFERTY

1899-1947

Un Campione

"A champion," Ham said.

"Someone thought a lot of him," Richie said quietly. "Who put that there?"

"One of the Italian drivers came back here and set it up. His idols were Nuvolari and Dad. He wrote and told me what he had done. I never even met him to thank him. He was killed himself in the 'forty-eight Mille Miglia."

Below them the slope was so steep that the road seemed to be supported on its outer edge only by air. Far below the valley lay in its own silence, its stone farmhouses looking like some long-forgotten ruins under their moss of grape-vines.

Then they heard the car coming down the pass. A moment later the green Cooper-Bristol came slowly round the corner. It pulled up behind the Wizard, and Taz got out and joined them. He stood looking at the simple memorial, then he said, "Mother might like to see this."

"She would," Ham said. "But I've never suggested bringing her here."

It wouldn't do her any good. She'd only start again going through every little detail of how Dad was killed."

"Where did he go off?" Taz said. "Right here?"

"No," Ham said, and in his mind he came round the corner again, holding the old Aston Martin on the road, and there was his father's car already going into its skid. The sweat broke on him, as it had then, and he turned away, looking down the road. "It was down there about another thirty or forty yards. He was trying not to go over the edge——" He stopped again: the sweat was running on him now. He shut his eyes, but that was no help: the memory was only clearer. He opened them again, feeling the sweat and the pain and the fear that cloaked him, that he was sure he could no longer hide from his brother and Richie. I'm finished, he thought: I shan't even be able to drive in this race. He had made his pilgrimage and he had been betrayed.

"We better be getting on," Richie said, as two more cars came down the pass and



swung round the corner. He could see that Ham had been affected by the memory of what had occurred at this spot. But he hadn't recognized the fear.

Ham turned and walked quickly away, and got into the Wizard. As he sat down behind the wheel he could feel himself trembling and there were tears behind his eyes. What hurt was that he knew they were as much for himself as for his father.

Richie said nothing, going back to his note taking and filming as if there had been no interruption, and in that same strained and unhappy silence they drove on to Bologna. For now Richie had recognized the fear. At Bologna he said, "Let's stop for a beer."

They went into the dark cave of a small *trattoria* and ordered beers. Richie said nothing till he had drunk half his beer. "Ham, would you rather call this race off?" he said at last.

Ham looked up, startled for the moment; then he put down his glass and looked out of the window.

"It's as apparent as that, is it?"

"Look, sport, I'm not criticizing you." Richie waved a fly away from his beer. "I know what it's like. I've been scared myself. I've never told anyone this before, but I was glad the Jerries took me prisoner after I'd crashed that time in Holland. I didn't want to fly a kite again, ever. I was just glad I didn't have to go back to England and look for excuses to be grounded. I'm telling you this because I want you to know that I understand how it can be."

"Thanks, Richie." Richie had offered him the chance of escape, but he knew he couldn't take it. He was in debt to Richie, even if only for his understanding, and he couldn't back out now. "I'll be all right when it comes to the race."

"You didn't mind me mentioning this?" Richie said, knowing that he and Ham had gone as deep as friendship could go, afraid that he might have gone too far.

"It's all right," Ham said and put his hand on Richie's shoulder as he stood up. "Sport."

Richie grinned, relieved. "Let's go."

They drove on to Brescia. The town seemed to have filled up since their departure yesterday morning. In the dark, curdled streams of traffic you could hear the occasional angry rumble of a tuned-up sports car with

open exhaust. Bunting had flowered overnight on the houses; flags made a carnival stall of a sober bank. Ham drove the dusty, travel-stained Wizard to the garage Richie had rented. When they reached there, Bartell and George Hayes came running out to meet them.

"Bad news," Bartell blurted. "The F.I.A. won't pass my tyres." The F.I.A. was the *Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile*, the controlling body for all international motor events. "They say they have never been tested in a race. They want us to switch to proven tyres."

"Oh, that's bloody ridiculous!" Richie said. "A friend of mine had this trouble when he first signed with Aston Martin." Richie turned his films over to Charlie. "Charlie, you know where these have to go in Milan. Tell the bloke we want 'em tonight if possible, but stay with him till he's finished 'em. We wanna run 'em off tomorrow. Ham and I are going round again on Wednesday." He looked at Bartell. "My wife and the other women arrive? Kitty has to type out these notes for me."

"They're arrived," Bartell said impatiently.

"I'll go with Bartell and Carlin to see the F.I.A. official," Richie said with a wink at Ham. "I'll just give him the facts."

"I'll take the notes in," Ham said. "Best of luck with the F.I.A., sport."

After they had left, Bill Sitkin offered Ham a lift into Brescia. "How'd the tyres go?" Sitkin was a small man with a flat, mid-Western accent. He wore steel-rimmed spectacles and a wide-brimmed hat that made him look like a scholarly schoolboy playing at cowboys.

"It was no real test. They were all right, I suppose."

"You haven't much confidence in them, have you?" Sitkin said, driving the car with careful concentration.

"I've had them blow out under me," Ham said. "Have you?"

Sitkin took his eyes from the road and smiled; it was a young smile and completely altered the set of his face. "You've got me there, Mr. Rafferty. I've never driven a car fast enough to blow a tyre. Excuse me for sounding critical."

"It's all right," Ham said, warming to the little man. "Have you decided yet where to set up supply points?"

"Pescara, Rome and Florence, at the control points. We are hoping that you'll get beyond Ravenna without meeting trouble. I think the idea is to have young Hayes at Pescara, I'll be at Rome with Ed Carlin and

two mechanics we're hiring, and Charlie Carter will be in Florence. If all goes well we'll have a tyre change only at Rome."

Ham delivered the note-book to Kitty Launder, then went along to his mother's room in the hotel. Sophie was there, too, looking out of the window down into the Piazza Vittoria. Ham kissed them both, and then took them both downstairs to the lounge.

"There's a hitch over the tyres?" Janet said.

"Richie will iron it out."

"What happens if he doesn't iron it out?" Sophie said. "Does that mean you can't race?"

"Not necessarily," Ham said and saw the small hope that had been in her face suddenly die. "We can always race on other tyres. But it will be a blow to your father. And I don't think Richie'd be too happy racing on someone else's tyres, not after your father has staked him the way he has."

"Dad can afford the money," Sophie said. "It's not as if it had all gone down the drain."

"I don't think that's the point," Ham said. "Your father—and Richie—have put more than money into this thing. You've done historical research, Sophie. You must have come across stories of men who got so far into things that there was no way back for them. What I mean is, if Columbus had turned back, would others have gone on across the Atlantic? I suppose they would have," he conceded, "but someone had to be first. If your father and Richie turned back now, it would be more than just money down the drain. You can't measure what they've put into this in pounds and pence. It's a man's life."

He sat back, suddenly embarrassed by the words that had poured out of him. He was aware that Sophie and his mother were looking at him with respect and, in Sophie's case at least, new understanding.

"There are some things in a man a woman can never touch," Janet said quietly. "Your father had it. I admired him for it and understood it. I was always sorry I could never share it, although God knows I tried." She stood up, looking at her watch. "Taz is taking me out to dinner, to some place where he says I can get spaghetti all down my chin and not have people stare at me. Good night, Ham. I'll see you at breakfast, Sophie." For a moment her hand rested on Sophie's shoulder, and then she was gone.

"Is it going to be like that for me?" Sophie asked. "Never being able to share completely with you whatever that feeling is?"

"I don't know," he said, listening to the sound of a car going past, like the murmur in a tiger's throat.

She was quiet for the rest of the evening. When he kissed her good night at the door of her room, it was almost as if they were back at the beginning of their relationship.

Next morning Richie told him they had persuaded the F.I.A. man to reconsider his decision and now they were waiting for the arrival of other F.I.A. officials. "But it means that if the tyres are passed, they'll have to be good and not let us down. Otherwise, they'll be barred for years."

"In the meantime," said Bartell, "we'll have a look at those films Charlie brought back from Milan, and then you two can get on your way again tomorrow. Carlin leaves for Rome tonight to get things fixed up down there. How were the tyres, George?"

George hesitated. "The tread had begun to loosen on one of the rear tyres," he said. "Not much, but just a little."

"Let's look at it," Ed Carlin said and followed George to the back of the garage. He scrutinized the tyre carefully. At last he straightened up. "It's lifted, all right. But——"

"But nothing," Ham said abruptly. "That's the second bloody time that tread has lifted. Can't you fellers make a tyre that will stand up to some wear and tear?"

"I can understand how you feel, Ham," Carlin said. "But I think this is something you might strike on any sort of make. Something had cut the tread, maybe you went over a broken bottle. That could happen to any sort of tyre. Look for yourself."

Ham looked at the tyre, then apologized. "I'm sorry. I suppose I'm getting on edge. It's always like this before a race."

They set up a projector in the garage and ran the films on a sheet stretched on the wall. They came back in the afternoon and ran them through again, and again that night. It was impossible



to memorize the whole route of a thousand miles, but Ham and Richie now had a fair knowledge of the more dangerous parts of the course. It was as important for Richie to memorize the course as it was for Ham, for Richie would, for a good part of the journey, be nothing less than Ham's eyes.

Ham saw Sophie again that night, but left her early, since he and Richie were getting away again in the morning at five-thirty. Richie had come in with him to the hotel, and now Ham knocked on the door of Kitty Launder's room because he was depending on Richie for a lift back to the *pensione*.

Richie came to the door with his arm about Kitty. "Look at her sunburn, will you? She's beginning to appreciate a decent climate." Richie kissed her. "Good night, love. If you're writing to the kids tomorrow, give 'em my love. Tell 'em to stay in outa the rain."

As they drove out of Brescia, Richie said, "If we do win this race and things seem to be going all right for us, I think I might take her for a long holiday. Scandinavia, somewhere like that. This past six months I've spent more time at the garage than I have at home. One night we had a fight and she'd have knocked my block off if she'd had something handy. I gotta make it up to her. She's been more patient than I had a right to ask her."

They left promptly at five-thirty next morning. They went faster this time; there was traffic on the road, but Ham knew something now of what lay ahead of him. Richie's notes had been typed out by Kitty and gummed together, so that they formed a long scroll mounted on rollers. He was using the notes now, giving Ham signals as they came to sections where Ham's length of vision was cut. He was also adding to the notes as they sped along.

They stopped for lunch in a village half-way between Ancona and Pescara. They sat in the open, under a trellis strangled by a grape-vine.

While they ate, other cars, easily identifiable by their open exhausts as Mille Miglia hopefuls, went roaring past. A Ferrari went by, and Richie stopped eating to listen to the fading crackle of its engine as it went racing on down out of sight, its sound lingering long after the dust it had disturbed had settled.

"That's music," he said, smiling to himself. "They can have all the other sounds they've invented. That's *my* music."

They stopped for only half an hour and then moved on again, intending to reach Siena and stay there for the night. On the long stretch down to Pescara Ham opened the car up a little, but still kept it under its maximum. They went through Pescara and headed for the mountains of Abruzzi.

They climbed swiftly, using the horn all the way as a warning on the bends. They went through Aquila, waving to a bunch of schoolchildren, and began the descent towards Rieti. They went down through a series of fast bends, Ham blowing the horn all the time, making sure that he wasn't creating danger for any driver coming up the mountain.

Then he came into a gentle S-bend that led into a sharp right-hand bend. He and Richie had stopped to look at this one on their previous trip round, and they had it marked for careful consideration. He felt Richie touch his sleeve, warning him of the sharpness of the right-hand bend, and he braked.

And the car began to slide. He felt it going from beneath him, no adhesion at all in any of the tyres, and he worked frantically to keep the car on the road. But there was nothing he could do; it was as if the road had turned to ice beneath them. With a shuddering crash and a tearing of metal, the car hit a low stone wall, swung back away from the wall, there was a moment of adhesion as the tyres crossed the road again, then the car had gone through the retaining wall on the outside edge of the right-hand bend and was plunging down the slope.

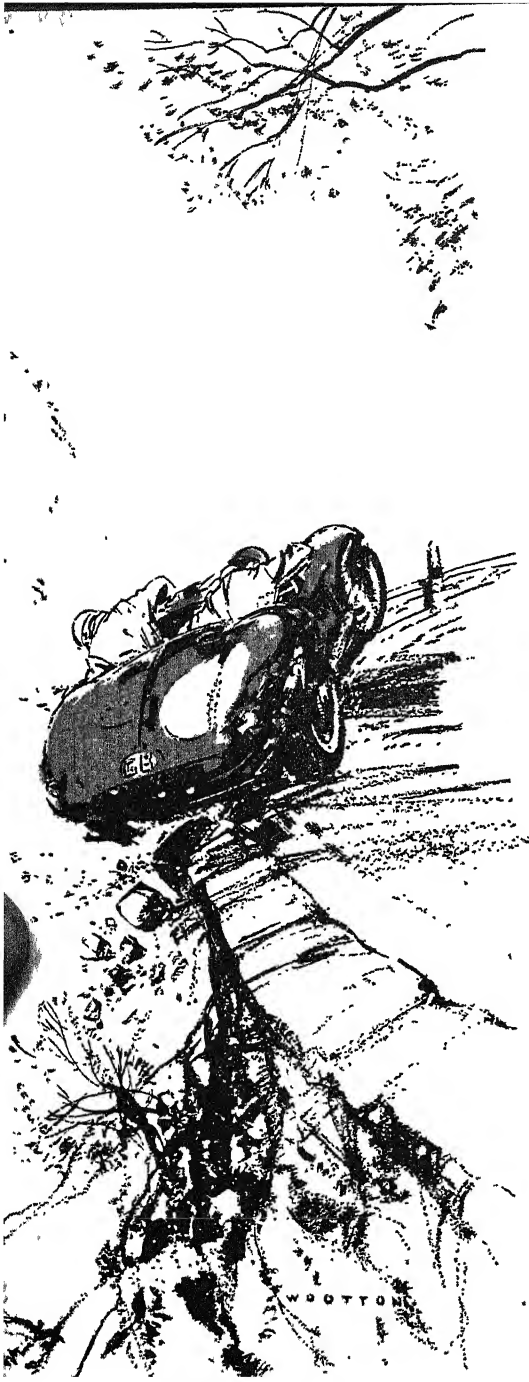
It hit a tree, swung broadside on, then rolled. Ham humped down in the cockpit, feeling Richie tucking himself in beside him; the car spun over them, obliterating the sky. Then there was another shuddering thump, a rending of metal, and the car had come to a halt, canted over at an extreme angle.

The horn was blowing loudly, like a long-drawn-out scream of pain. Ham, dazed but instinctively afraid of fire, yelling to Richie to get out, tumbled out of the car. He rolled down the slope, clutching at bushes to stop himself, and finished up against a big rock. He lay there, stretched out, staring down the steep slope that finished a hundred yards below in a boulder-strewn river bed. He said a prayer of thanks that the car had gone no farther than it had. Then he got up on his knees, making sure he had broken no bones, and looked up the slope to see if Richie had yet got out of the car.

But Richie would never get out of the car again, not of his own volition. He was still humped in his seat, blood running from a cut on his cheek, one hand resting almost casually on the steering-wheel. Before Ham touched him, he knew that Richie was dead, his neck broken in the single roll the car had made after striking the first tree.

The fat grease - stained hand still clutched the scroll of notes, spotted with blood from the cut on his cheek. Ham saw the note: *Sharp right-hand corner, watch it;* and the rest was a smear of blood. Ham leaned in and switched off the electric circuit, stopping the horn. In the sudden silence the car creaked and shuddered like a living thing, then it too had died and was silent.

A moment later a red flash went by on the road above, its tyres squealing as the driver fought it through the bend, then it was accelerating on down the road. The crackle of its engine died away down the mountainside, the music Richie would never hear again.



CHAPTER 11

IT WAS a large oil slick that had caused them to go off the road. A car or a truck, coming down the pass only minutes ahead of them, must have cracked its oil trap. The slick was long and broad, and Ham, drifting a little as he had braked to go round the right-hand bend, had slid all four wheels across the treacherous surface. So it was the cars, too, that had got Richie in the end; but a car he had never seen and one that might now be down in the village below, its driver unaware of the tragedy his vehicle had caused.

Ham had climbed back to the road and flagged down the next car to come down the pass, a Triumph TR3 driven by a young Scot, with an older, dour Scot as passenger. The middle-aged man, who said his name was McKechnie, had got out of the TR3 and stayed with Ham while the driver had gone on down to Antrodoco, the village at the foot of the mountain. From there he had phoned through to Rieti, summoning a doctor and an ambulance. By this time there were cars and trucks parked dangerously on the steep slope of the pass, men had been posted farther up the pass to warn other cars as they came down, and the road was black with people. McKechnie and a passing truck driver had lifted Richie's body from the car, covered it with a tarpaulin, and brought it up on to the road. Ham, sitting with his back to the retaining wall, could hear a small group of women praying as they stared down at the wrecked car and the still shape under the old tarpaulin.

When the ambulance had finally gone, McKechnie said, "Do you want us to send a message to anyone?"

Ham had already been offered a lift to Rome in one of the cars parked down the road.

"I'll phone from Rome," he said. "I think it's better if I tell his wife, instead of a stranger."

"I don't envy you," said McKechnie, and he and the young Scot got into their car and drove off.

Ham took one last look down at the wrecked Wizard. He felt stronger now and the shock had begun to wear off. On legs that were still unsteady he scrambled down to the car and looked it over: some of it would be salvageable but not much. He saw the blood-spattered scroll of notes

on the floor of the cockpit. He reached in and picked it up. The sections of it wound round the rollers were clean and unstained; it was Richie's record of their journey and he had marked his death spot with his own blood. With the scroll clutched tightly in his hand, Ham turned and climbed back up to the road. A few minutes later he was being driven on to Rome. He phoned Kitty from Rome. He had had to call his mother in this way and tell her of his father's death; the fact that this was the second time he was to bring bad news over the phone made it no easier. When Kitty at last came to the phone she was laughing; behind her there was the sound of other laughter. "Hello? Is that you, Richie? Ed has just been telling us one of his stories. Richie?"

"It's not Richie," Ham said, and then as gently as he could he told her the news. He heard her gasp, and the laughter behind her suddenly died.

There was silence on the line, and then Ham said, "Kitty, is my mother there with you?" There was silence again, then Janet came on the line. "Did she tell you the news, Mum?"

"Yes, son." Even in the distraction of the moment he remarked that she had never called him "son" before; she had now become old, and he wondered when it had happened. "Sophie has taken her up to her room. When are you coming back?"

"I'm catching the express in half an hour. And Mum—don't worry. I've got out of it all right."

He caught the train, riding slumped in one corner of the compartment. He shut his eyes, to shut out the grief and fear mingled in him. He had become almost an intimate of death, but he still couldn't accept it.

It was after midnight when he reached the hotel. Kitty had been given a sedative by a doctor and had gone to sleep. Janet and Sophie were sitting up waiting for him, and so were Bartell and Ed Carlin. None of them asked him a leading question; they were all prepared to wait till he told them of the tragedy in his own time. He ate, the first food he had had since just before noon, and drank three cups of strong black coffee. He tasted none of the food or drink, but he knew he needed it.

Then he told them what had happened. At last Bartell said, "Was it the fault of the tyres or something wrong with the car?"

"No," Ham said. "It was just that bloody oil slick."

"I'm glad of that," Bartell said slowly. "I wouldn't like to think Richie

had died because of something faulty in my tyres. I liked Richie. I'd give up making tyres if I knew that one of mine killed him. I mean that."

"The tyres were all right, Joe," Ham said. "The crash proved they were all right. We were smashed about enough to have blown every one of them. But they were all right."

Ham looked at Ed Carlin. "Are you going to Rome?"

"I was going tonight. But I decided to wait when—when you phoned with the news."

"What did the F.I.A. decide about the tyres?"

"We can use them," said Carlin. "If we still race."

Ham was aware of them all looking at him in a way that he couldn't mistake; even Bartell, the millionaire who paid others to butter him up, had left the decision to him. He felt suddenly constrained, knowing at last the limits of himself. He rose abruptly from the table, wanting to leave them. "I'm tired, worn out. Good night."

"I'll drive you out to the *pensione*," Sophie said, rising and moving round to be near him.

At the *pensione* Sophie didn't get out of the car, and Ham stood leaning with his arms on the door. "Darling," she said, "I talked with Kitty and your mother for quite a while tonight. Or rather I listened." She sat for a moment, a young girl who had had opened up to her some of the life and reason for living of two older women, women who had lost their husbands, their major reasons for living. "I always thought, from what Richie used to say, that it was Kitty who kept them there in England. But she'd have gone back to Australia with him. Gone anywhere with him. He was the one who wanted to stay in England. To be near cars and the racing. And she understood that. She said she'd had a quarrel with him about how much time he was spending at the garage, working on the car."

"He told me about that."

"She cried when she mentioned that. She said she knew how much the car meant to him. She said she knew he didn't love her any the less, just because he had something else he loved, too." The car, its engine turned off, creaked as it cooled in the night air. "We'll live in England, if you like, darling. I'll even try to understand if you have to go on driving. I'll worry and I'll hate you every time you go out to race. But I'll try to understand."

Tenderness was there with love now; there was no need to touch her to know how her love was. "I love you," he said, a phrase that had become a cliché, but which was still the best and only way of offering the heart. Then a little later he stood in the middle of the road watching the cold red eye of the tail-light lose itself beyond a bend in the road; they hadn't kissed good night, but neither had felt the need for it. They had begun life together.

In the morning Taz came to see him at the *pensìone* while he was still having breakfast. "I heard this morning about Richie." His young face had suffered some sort of defeat; the searching look had gone from his eyes. "I went to see Mother. I tried to see Kitty, but I didn't have the guts."

"I have to go in and see her. She's leaving today, going home to the kids. Poor little devils."

"How will she get on? Financially, I mean."

"I don't know. But I shouldn't imagine Richie left her much. Everything he had has gone into the garage and the car."

"One car," said Taz. "It's not much."

"It's only the first car. There'll be others. Richie asked me to go in with him as his partner. I told him to forget about me. I wish now I hadn't," Ham said and felt the presence of Richie: the merriness in the plump-cheeked face, the gravelly voice complaining about the weather. "I'll take over the car and garage. Bartell wanted to go in with Richie. Maybe he'll come in with me. Richie was never the sort to want a memorial, but I think there's nothing he'd like better than a couple of his cars passing each other on the Aylesbury road."

"Will you be able to sell them without a race to boost them?" Taz asked. "Back at the hotel Bartell was getting ready to cancel the entry. They're not expecting you to race."

"There's not much I can do," Ham said, trying not to show his relief. "I can't race without a navigator."

Then Charlie and George came into the dining-room, both looking as if they hadn't slept. "We'll drive you into town, Ham," Charlie said. "Or the Wizard is out there, if you want it."

Ham knew what they meant: the Wizard was there if he wanted to take it into town for the scrutineers to look at it. If he wanted it to be prepared for Sunday's race.

He stared back at them, and then he heard Taz say, "I'll come with you as navigator, if you want me. I asked Ainsworth this morning if he'd release me. I know the course a little. And Richie had his notes."

And then he knew that, if there was to be a memorial to Richie, it was not to be his cars on the Aylesbury road. It was to be one car on the roads of Italy, in the Mille Miglia, one car driven flat out for the whole thousand miles in the hope of coming in first.

"We'll take the Wizard in," he said, rising from the table, putting his hand on the arm of his brother. "Me and Taz."

CHAPTER 12

HAM SAT in the car, his foot on the pedal, waiting to ease it forward as the starter called him up on to the ramp. Beside him Taz sat checking the notes on the rollers; this was the carbon copy—the original with Richie's blood on it had been burnt. In front of Taz, on a wide shelf beneath the dashboard, there were two bottles of orange juice and a small box containing biscuits, fruit and chocolate; for almost the next eleven hours they would be continuously on the move and there would be no stops for meals. In the glove-box there were two spare pairs of goggles, a spare pair of gloves for Ham, and some cleaning tissues. They both wore green helmets with short visors and goggles with green anti-glare glass. They were dressed in green overalls, wide waist belts and soft suede boots. Both had also liberally sprinkled the inside of their underpants with talcum powder to make sitting through the long journey more comfortable.

Friday morning they had brought the car into the Piazza Vittoria, easing it through the clamorous throng that seemed to cover every inch of the big square. On the east and west sides of the square there were small islands partitioned off by wooden barriers. The crowd hung over the barriers, excitement like bright paint on their faces, dreams behind their eyes: some day they, too, would drive their glittering Ferraris and Alfa-Romeos into those spaces to be inspected by the scrutineers.

Two *carabinieri*, flashing their authority like muskets, had appeared out of the crowd and guided Ham and Taz through to one of the scrutineering enclosures. The crowd hushed for a moment, as the loud-speakers gave it the information it was waiting for.

"Before the scrutineers now we have the British Wizard of Hamilton Rafferty, competitor in the over two thousand c.c. class."

"Rafferty!" The crowd surged forward. "L'Aquila!"

The number the Wizard would carry in the race, which was also the time at which it would start, was painted on the bonnet and side: 718. Then it was pushed forward for inspection by the officials seated at tables. Seals were placed on certain sections of the engine and chassis, to ensure that no replacements were made before or during the race, and then Ham had got back into the car. He had gunned the motor for the benefit of the crowd, who had responded with an appreciative cheer, and then had taken the car out of the enclosure, pushing it at the crowd, which somehow made a path for it, and had driven it out of town and back to the garage.

Once committed to the race, Ham had felt easier. He had taken the first step and that had been the most difficult. Whatever followed was at the whim of stronger forces than his own.

Now it was Sunday morning, thirty seconds to go and 7.18 was coming up on the clock.

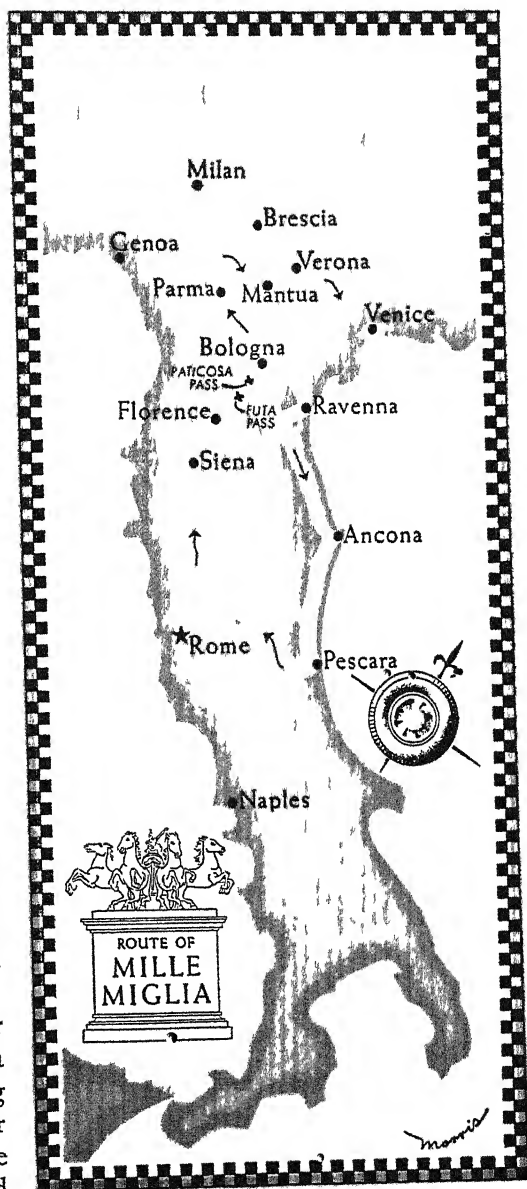
The white-coated official flagged them forward up on to the bright-yellow ramp. Behind them were five cars; 603 cars were ahead of them. From nine o'clock the previous night, divided into different classes, the cars had gone off at one-minute intervals. Up to midnight the cars had been mere family cars, driven by drivers whose one race in the year was the Mille Miglia. It was daylight before the first cars driven by the professional racing men had begun their long journey. The winner of the Mille Miglia was the car that covered the thousand miles in the least time. It was expected to come from the last dozen or so cars to get away. They were the big cars driven by the professionals and every professional wanted to win the Mille Miglia.

The Wizard was the centre of attraction for the thirty seconds that were given to each driver before he was flagged away and his place taken by the next driver. Then Ham saw the starter raise his flag. He raised the revs of the engine, easing his foot on the clutch; the flag dropped and he moved the car forward and down the ramp. As soon as they hit the roadway he accelerated, going smoothly up through the gears, down the long narrow lane of the Viale Rebuffone, between the black hedges of people; the bleary-eyed people who had been here all night and would

be here again at midday to see the first of the cars as they returned. Then the road widened, the crowd thinned and the Wizard was racing at full speed for Verona, forty-two miles away.

This was different from when Ham had gone round with Richie in the other car. They were travelling almost twice as fast now; the howling of the engine and the wind was deafening. All yesterday Ham and Taz had read and re-read Richie's notes, looked at the films again and again, and devised signals by which Taz could guide Ham. From now on, if they were to survive, they had to have complete confidence in each other. A wrongly read direction, a slackening of concentration at the wheel, and they could both go off the road to their probable death.

Ahead of them, after fifteen miles, they saw a green dot rapidly growing larger, becoming a Jaguar XK140. Ham brought the Wizard up behind it, and



Taz reached for the horn button by his left hand. They went past the Jaguar with a long, almost derisive blast of the horn, and then they were coming into a village. Taz made his signal, warning of an S-bend that could be taken flat out in top gear, and Ham chose his line and took the car through, going so close to a garden wall that dust seemed to fly from the masonry.

Beyond Verona, on the way to Vicenza, they were passing other cars rapidly; at a hundred and sixty they went past an Austin-Healey that seemed to be in no more than second gear. Then they were through Vicenza, and Padua was the next town. They went into Padua at a hundred and fifty, braking hard round the right-angled bend at the end of the street, scraping the straw bales as Ham took the car a little too wide. They roared through the town, aware of the black blur of the crowd, and headed for Ravenna, the first control point, a hundred miles farther on.

They went into Ravenna with Ham braking hard as they approached the control point. Taz held up the route-card board as they slowed. An official ran alongside the car, reached in and thumped a rubber stamp on the route card, then fell back, waving them on.

Beyond Ravenna was the winding road to Forlì, then an abrupt turn south to Rimini. From here on to Pescara was the fastest stretch of the whole race. On their left the Adriatic was a vast sun-cobbled field. In the villages the fishing nets were hung out to dry, making lattice-work of the morning sun. But Ham and Taz saw only the dusty blue road ahead of them. It was a ribbon, a thousand miles long, that the Wizard had to wind into itself.

They went over a humped bridge at a hundred and seventy, rising in the air like an aeroplane. Ham kept the wheels on line, confident Taz hadn't given him the wrong signal, and two hundred feet farther on the car landed back on the road, still on line and still doing a hundred and seventy.

Pescara was the second control point. As they slowed for their route card to be stamped, they saw George Hayes at the pit beyond the control waving a green tablecloth tacked to a piece of bamboo.

"You're second!" he yelled as they rolled to a stop at the pit and George swung the arm of the petrol gravity tank over the rear of the car. "Twelve seconds behind the back-marker!"

A mechanic was cleaning the dead flies and insects from the windshield; another was checking the oil and water; a third had gone round the tyres. Bartell hadn't spared any expense: these men had been hired for the day for thirty seconds' work. Ham munched on the peeled banana that had been handed to him; Taz was sucking an orange.

"Take her away!" George yelled. "See you in Brescia!"

Ham swallowed the last of the banana, popped a fresh piece of gum into his mouth, let in the gears and accelerated away with a whine of the engine and a scream of protest from the tyres. If Rossano, the backmarker, had gained twelve seconds as far as Ravenna, which was where his time would have been taken and phoned through, he would gain even more on the long stretch down to Pescara. Ham had to try to hold his own on this stretch. The next stop was Rome, a hundred and fifty miles away, on the other side of the mountains.

This was the stretch where Richie had been killed.

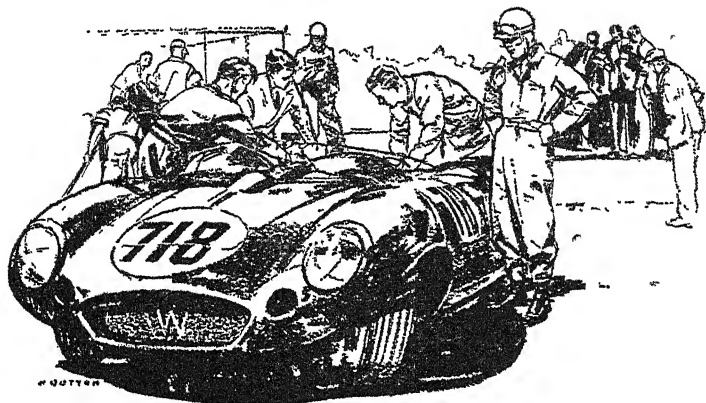
As the last car rolled down off the ramp and accelerated away down the Viale Rebuffone, Bartell, Sophie and Janet turned away. "Nothing to do but wait now," Bartell said. "I think I'll try to snatch a couple of hours' sleep. I'm pop-eyed."

"I'm going to Mass," Janet said. "They always have High Mass at the cathedral as soon as the last car gets away."

"I'll come with you," Sophie said. "I know I couldn't sleep."

Bartell left them at the entrance to the hotel, and the two women followed the crowd to the cathedral. They had to stand; there was not even room to kneel. Clouds of incense floated like breath in the stony chill of the cathedral. Janet stood with her head bowed, her sensible English hat pushed a little askew by the crush of arms and shoulders about her. The beads ran through her fingers; she wove a plea of prayer. Let them come back, Lord. Let them come back.

She had been standing at the window of her hotel room on Friday morning when she had seen Ham drive the green Wizard into the packed square. She had recognized the car and guessed who the driver was; she had had to put on her glasses to see who was riding with Ham. She had stared down at the car as it had inched its way through the crowd; then her eyes had blurred and she had turned giddy. She had never expected to see them in the same car together.



Later they had come to see her, like schoolboys who had broken a window instead of a promise.

"You don't have to tell me," she had said without resentment. "I saw you down there in the scrutineers' enclosure. Don't try to excuse yourselves. I know how it is. I've expected it all along."

"Richie would have wanted us to race the car, Mum," Ham said. "And there's Kitty to think of."

"Have you seen her?" Janet asked.

Ham shook his head. "Not yet. I've just seen Joe Bartell. He and I are going to take over the Wizard, go on building it."

"We'll be all right, Mother." Taz could only offer a young man's comfort, the confidence of youth: he hadn't seen his father killed, as Ham had, nor stood beside his mother when Ham had telephoned the news through to her.

"What happens after this?" she said. "Do you go on racing this car? Till you have made its name?"

"We'll get this race over first," Ham said slowly. "That's the way I've always driven. One race at a time."

And now here she was in the cathedral, among strangers but for the young American girl beside her, praying as she had been praying for over thirty years, as she had been praying from the afternoon of her wedding day. Praying that she would not be left alone.

THE DAY was now hot. Ahead of the speeding car the mountains

climbed steeply to the cobalt blaze of the sky. Ham was bathed in sweat, it made rivulets in the dust that had blackened his face and arms. His wrists and arms had begun to feel the strain of continually battling with the wheel; his left arm felt worse than the right, because of the extra work it had had on the gear-lever. He could feel his left leg stiffening up from the continual effort on the clutch.

They were on a straight stretch. He felt a touch on his thigh. Taz was shouting something. He leaned his head sideways and Taz bellowed faintly in his ear: "Leak!"

He looked wildly about the cockpit, looking for the gush of oil or petrol; then abruptly he understood. He braked sharply, grinning to himself, and followed Taz out of the car as the latter leaped out to relieve himself. To race with a full bladder was dangerous; a bump could bring about serious internal injury.

He unbuttoned his overalls, and looked up to see a long line of brown-robed monks standing on the bank above them. The monks, their shaven heads glistening like river stones, clapped their hands in encouragement; this was no time for false modesty, this was a time for urgency. The monks and the two drivers stood there facing each other, laughing heartily, while on the road behind, other cars went by in hurricanes of sound and dust. Then Ham and Taz waved to the monks, and were back in the car and on their way.

As they climbed into the mountains the heat seemed to become more intense. They raced through narrow streets, in shadows, as dark as tunnels. The race had begun to take its toll. They passed cars that had left the road; one car was jammed bonnet-first into the front doorway of a house; in a village square another burnt like a *fiesta* effigy.

They were still passing cars that were in the race. As they climbed towards Aquila they came up behind a two-litre Ferrari whose driver looked as if he needed all the road if he was to stay on it. On every bend and corner the car finished in the gravel and dust on the edges of the road. Ham was no more than six feet behind the Ferrari as it went into and came out of each bend. Ham knew he had to get past; he couldn't sit behind this slower car till they were down out of the mountains. Taz was blowing the horn and flicking the lights on and off, but the driver of the Ferrari was in a world of his own.

They went through Aquila, a tempest of two cars that blew people

back against the houses, and began the descent towards Rieti. This was where Richie had been killed; but Ham shut his mind against the thought. The bends were fast, and the Ferrari's driver took advantage of them. Extra power meant little here; everyone was fast downhill! But this was where the drivers competed against each other.

Then they were coming down to the spot where Ham and Richie had gone off the road. Taz gave the signal, intimating the right-left S-bend and then the sharp right-hand bend; but Ham could see the whole road in his mind as clearly as if it were opened out for him. The Ferrari went through the first part of the S-bend already on its brakes; it went wide on the next section to take the right-hand bend. In that moment Ham brought the Wizard up on the inside of the Ferrari; for an instant the two cars were level as they braked for the right-hand bend. Then the Ferrari's driver's nerves gave; he trod even harder on his brakes.

The bend was open before them now; Ham took his foot off the brake and accelerated. He was depending on the Wizard's power; the engine roared, he felt the tyres grip and then they were through the bend and the Ferrari had been left behind. The gap in the retaining wall was still there, and the smashed tree against which the practice car had been flung; but Ham didn't see it, and Taz, admiring his brother's driving, forgot to look.

Then they were down out of the mountains, and on the way to Rome they touched a hundred and seventy. They came into Rome, over the cobbled streets on the outskirts, sliding on the corners as if the cobbles were blocks of ice; and now Taz was using the horn and the lights to warn, not cars, but spectators of their approach.

The crowds, dedicated to suicide, had encroached on the road till there seemed only room enough for a bicycle to squeeze through. Taz continued to blast on the horn and the crowd fell back as the Wizard went through between the human walls at a hundred and thirty. Then they were at the control point.

Ham clambered out of the car and walked up and down. Two mechanics were already at work on the rear wheels—it had been decided to change the rear tyres here at Rome; a third had run a jack under the car and was waiting to lower it again. Petrol was being pressured into the tank, enough to get them to Florence; oil was pumped in and water sloshed into the radiator. Ham, moving up and down, trying to get the

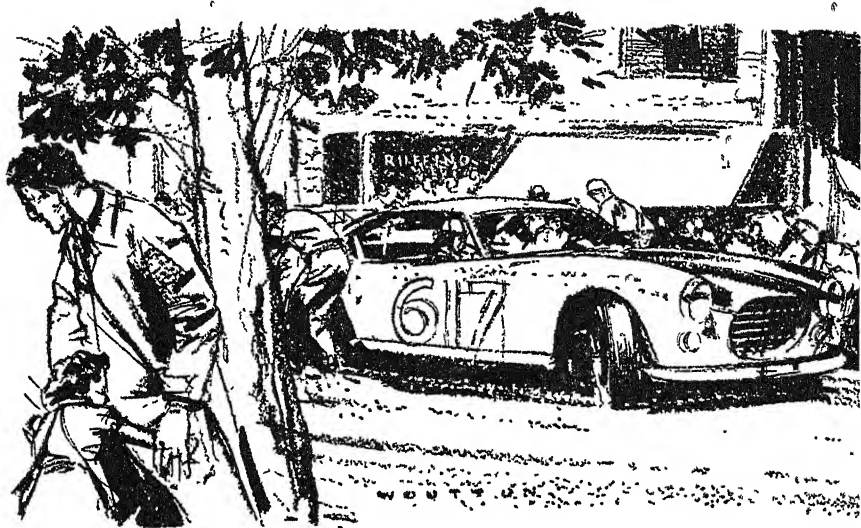
aching stiffness out of his leg, admired the way Ed Carlin had organized things here.

Carlin gave him a glass of orange juice and a slab of chocolate. While Ham drank the orange juice, Carlin was swabbing his face and neck with a wet sponge like a second working on a boxer between rounds. "Rossano's your man to beat. He's still about ten seconds ahead of you—they just phoned through from Rieti. You picked up some on him coming through the mountains from Pescara. He's faster than you on the straights, so you've got to hold him from now on and get ahead of him the other side of Florence. Okay, they've nearly finished. Good luck!"

Ham, his mouth still full of chocolate, swung into the seat of the car. The back wheels hit the roadway with a thump as the jack was jerked from beneath the car. Ham had already started the car and was in gear; the tyres spun, gripped and they were away. They had been on the road about five and a half hours and now the toughest part of the journey was ahead of them. On through Viterbo and up the Radicofani Pass, with spectators packed like suicide clubs on every bend. The sun was now high, beating down to make a furnace of the cramped cockpit; the only escape was to shut the mind against it. Taz had already begun to feel sick; he welcomed the distraction of reading the notes, giving signals, blowing the horn and flashing the lights. They swept down out of the pass, passing a blue Gordini that went off the road into a wall at the moment they swept by it.

They came down a long straight slope, seeing the village ahead of them, and Taz gave the signal to brake and go into the village on a right-hand curve at half throttle. Ham began to brake as the village shot nearer. He had seen a red car go into the village about three hundred yards ahead of them in a cloud of dust, and some instinct told him something was wrong.

They came round the corner of a house flush with the road and there was the red car right in front of them. And it was surrounded by villagers all working furiously to get it going again. A woman screamed, but Ham and Taz, deafened by the noise of their own car, didn't hear her. They just saw the faces turn towards them, white flashes of terror, and Taz suddenly cried out. Ham didn't brake any harder; he turned the wheel a little and let the car slide. The paralysed crowd swept nearer; Taz saw

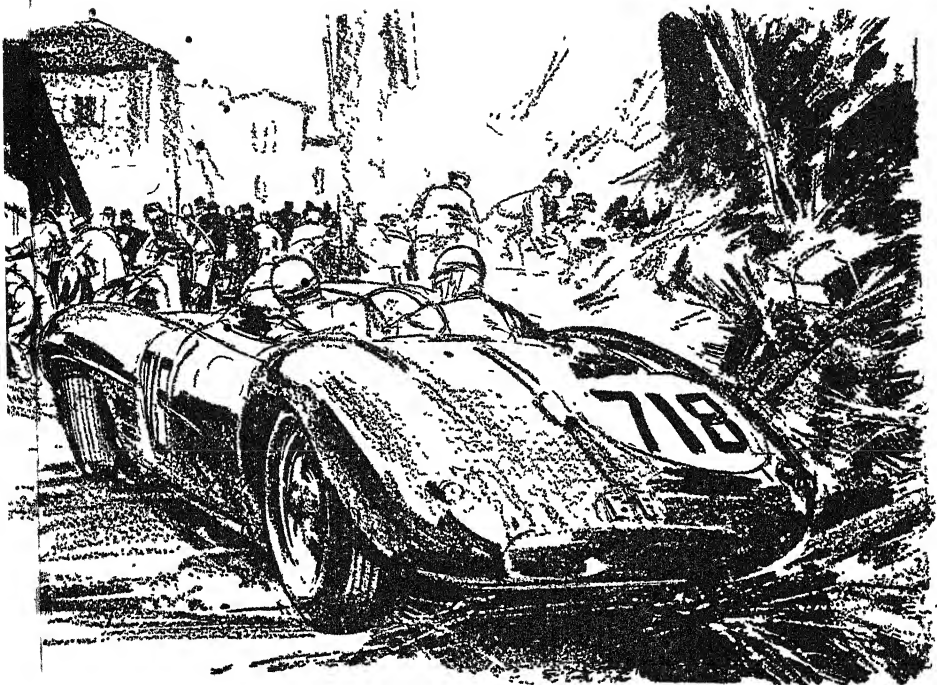


a child turn its face into its father's legs. The Wizard was now broadside on; the tail swung farther and now Ham braked again. The Wizard shot sideways, away from the crowd, and then it had stopped dead against the straw bales by the sides of the road.

There was a scream of relief from the crowd, but Ham was putting the car into first gear and pulling it away from the straw bales. The road was blocked and there was always the chance of another car coming round the corner. He slammed the car into reverse, got it straightened out, found a gap in the crowd and accelerated through. Taz looked up and nodded in admiration. Ham grinned, pleased with himself and his brother's praise: he knew it was one of the best pieces of driving he had done in all his career.

The minutes and then the hours went by, and still they rode in their own burning punishing world. They blazed through Siena, and down into Florence. The roads here were bad and the car bumped and fought like a wild thing; they skated down a long length of tram-line that was like a strip of steel ice. They shot over a bridge, through the narrow, winding streets at over a hundred, crossing a square in a long four-wheel drift, and then they were into the control point.

Their route card was stamped and they kept rolling on to where Charlie, red-faced and with his overalls dark with sweat, was waiting



for them with the long arm of the gravity petrol tank ready for them.

"You'll have to go faster!" he shouted as he shoved the nozzle into their tank and nodded farther along the pits. "Rossano's just come in behind you. He's one minute ahead!"

Ham spat out his gum and gobbled a new piece. He wiped his face with the wet sponge handed to him, then squeezed the rest of the water down the back of his neck. Charlie swung the petrol nozzle away, waving them on, and Ham crunched in the gears and shot the car away from the pits. Before he had to concentrate on the bend in the street ahead of him, he saw in his mirror Rossano's red Ferrari just coming away from the pits behind him.

Heat had built up over the mountains ahead and already there were baleful grins of lightning beyond the farthest peaks. Melted tar had mixed with oil and rubber from the hundreds of cars that had already gone through here, and in parts the road surface had become a deadly gamble. Ham's arms were in a continual whirl as he fought the wheel

and flung the gear-lever about in its gate. Occasional swift glances in his mirror showed that Rossano had not gained on this tricky stretch. But that was little consolation; he not only had to stop Rossano from gaining, but he had to gain on *him*. Somewhere in these mountains he had to regain the minute he had lost and gain a further minute or two to make up for the long stretches through Modena, Parma and Cremona, where the Ferrari's superior speed would tell.

They were at the summit of the Futa Pass when the storm broke.

AFTER SHE and Janet had left the cathedral, Sophie went back to her room at the hotel. She had at least another nine hours to wait before Ham would be back here in Brescia, safe with her and all danger behind him; not till then would she be able to relax completely. When she finally got to sleep, she tossed and turned and moaned as if in the throes of nightmare. When she woke in mid-afternoon, she looked at her watch in the dim light of the room. Two more hours before she could expect to see Ham again. But if he survived this race, there would be no more waiting after this. On Friday afternoon, a few hours after he had told her that he and Taz were going to race together in the Mille Miglia, they had driven out to Lake Garda. And there he had given her his promise.

They had parked the car in the shade of three tall poplars and got out and gone down to the water's edge. Here, there was no beach, but a shelf of blindingly white stones. On the far side of the lake a mountain reared itself almost fiercely into the sky, and behind it the sky had turned black with thunder-clouds. But on this side of the lake there was still bright sunshine. They took their shoes off and paddled in the cool water.

"It's beautiful." Sophie looked around her, at the villas across the road, at a lone boat far up the lake, its sail a sharp white splinter in the distant view. Then she looked behind her again. "I wonder if any of these villas are for renting? It would be nice to come here for our honeymoon."

He smiled and put his hand over hers. "And if we could afford it we might come back here each year for our holidays."

She dug her nails into his hands. "Oh, I wish we were married now."

A car went slowly by on the road behind them, but they were oblivious of it. They stood ankle-deep in the water, their arms about each other, while the storm came down over the mountain and began to cross the

lake. "There's one thing I brought you out here to tell you," Ham said.

"Yes?" she said, not wanting to be told anything right now but that he loved her.

"Since we're going to settle down in England and make the Wizard, I don't have much to worry about as far as a career goes. Your father is going to be my partner, not my boss. And I'm confident that it won't be too long before we're making money out of the Wizard. So," he looked down at her, "after Sunday I'm retiring."

"You mean that, darling?"

"It's a promise," he said. "My last race will be the Mille Miglia. I talked it over with your father this morning. If we do all right in Sunday's race, then we enter for Le Mans. But Taz will drive for us. And he'll drive for us, in sports-car events anyway, from now on. Happy?"

"Happy?" she cried, and pressed herself fiercely against him. "Oh, darling, darling!"

AND NOW, lying here in the dim room, with the crackle of cars coming up from the square below, those that had already been round the Mille Miglia, she was aware that the room had suddenly become darker.

She got up, crossed the room and flung open the shutters. In the square below umbrellas were opening like black toadstools as the first drops of rain began to fall. And still another two hours to wait.

THE RAIN hit the Wizard suddenly, like the spray of a huge wave, as it came round a corner on the Futa. One moment they were driving through dust, and the next moment the dust on the windshield had turned to mud. It turned to mud on Ham's goggles, too; and he snatched them down from his eyes. He gestured to Taz, and the latter dug in the glove-box for a spare pair of goggles.

There had not been enough rain as yet to wash the mud from the roadway; the car slid on the greasy surface on every bend. Several cars had gone off the road as soon as they ran into the rain. The Wizard began to slide as it came down a steep slope; it approached a corner almost side on. Ham, trying to see through the already smeared goggles he had just put on, felt a moment of chilling panic; his hand ceased to move on the wheel, as if something told him death was inevitable at this coming moment, and the car continued to slide. Then the urge for

survival took hold of him; he waited till the last moment, till they were almost at the corner, then he put power into the car. The Wizard slid a little farther, the edge of the road rushing nearer, then the tyres, Bartell's tyres, took hold. Next moment they were round the corner.

The rain now was sheeting down. Cars ahead of them had begun to slow; they went past a train of five of them. The mirror now was distorted with water; it was impossible to see if Rossano was still close to them.

Ham had always been one of the best wet-weather drivers. His skill was still there if only he had the confidence to use it. Now was Ham's chance to prove he was still the master of the rain. It was also his chance to win the race, because there was no one else in the running now who could compete against him in conditions like this. What he had told Richie months ago was true: in the Mille Miglia it was the driver and not the car who won the race.

They went through a village, crossing the ice-like cobbles on a trailing throttle; they ploughed through mud at the end of the village and then they were on the open road again. They had a glimpse of cars stopped in the village, and villagers clustered like sheltering birds in doorways. On this open stretch Taz snatched a quick look backward. Rossano was nowhere in sight.

They were driving with their headlights on, through gloom that pressed down on them like a solid curtain. The cockpit now was awash with water, foaming about their feet. Their overalls were supposed to be waterproof, but they hadn't been proofed against rain like this. Taz was trying to read his notes beneath a plastic covering; he began to grow scared that he would give Ham a wrong direction. They went down the Raticosa Pass, past the spot where their father had been killed, at a speed only a little below what they would have been doing in the dry. The stone memorial was dark with mud; but they went by without seeing it. And from that spot on, as if he had crossed some Rubicon of danger, Ham began to drive even faster, to drive as if he had been driving in rain all his life.

He went down the pass in a series of controlled slides that seemed to ignore the treacherous surface beneath them. Twice they scraped the stone parapet on the outside edge of the road; each time Ham brought the Wizard crackling away from it without slackening speed.

Then they were down out of the mountains and heading for Bologna. They went down into the city at well over a hundred and thirty, and braking a long way ahead of the control point so that they wouldn't skid. Their route card was stamped while they were still moving, the race official glad to get back into shelter again out of the pelting rain, and they were moving away and heading for the fast straights up through Modena and Parma to Piacenza.

Water had begun to have its effect on the car now. There was water in the brakes and in the king-pins, so that the steering had tightened till it was almost solid. Ham was steering now mostly by using the throttle and rear wheels, an art that Taz was forced to admire even while they rode the thin line that separated them from disaster. It was the art of a man with long experience and, now, supreme confidence in his own skill.

They raced through Modena and beyond it were touching a hundred and sixty, spray trailing behind them in a long whirling veil. Ham, unable to see now through his goggles, had taken them off and was driving without them, his eyes slit against the painful pelt of the rain. They were still passing cars, but none of them was challenging them now.

Through Parma, Piacenza and through the rain all the way. Through Mantua, where the ghost of Nuvolari must have risen to salute them. And then they were on the long last stretch to Brescia.

Ham was driving now with confidence, skill, pleasure and a sweet agony of regret. This was his last race, and he had never driven a better one. He was soaked to the skin and he was cold and weary; his left leg burnt with pain and the muscles of his arms had turned to lead. He had never been happier; and yet mixed with the happiness there was sadness. This time next year he would be in Brescia, one of those watching and waiting; at Le Mans, Silverstone, Spa, Nürburg, he would only be able to watch and wait. While Taz, here beside him now, the young man with his racing life ahead of him, would be savouring this happiness. The envy of Taz had already begun.

He sat back, his arms at full stretch: for this day in all his career he was The Master. One with the great, with Nuvolari, Varzi, Caracciola, Fangio, one with his father.

The Wizard's engine rose to a crescendo, the needle on the rev counter rose higher, spray thickened and was flung higher and farther back. They went down the long road at a hundred and seventy, racing through

the last of the storm and into the thin sunlight that glistened on the town ahead of them.

Then they were coming into Brescia, coming up the Viale Rebuffone at a hundred miles an hour, the chequered flag ahead of them, and the roar of the crowd coming at them even above the roar of the engine. They crossed the line, the flag whipped down, and Ham began to slow.

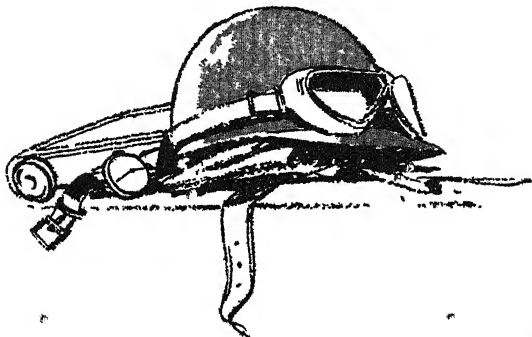
They rolled to a stop in a patch of blazing sunshine. Steam was rising from the car; Ham lifted his feet out of three inches of water in the cockpit. Their clothes clung to them like other skins; their bodies were stiff with cold and fatigue. But they were both laughing.

Then Bartell, his thin, bony face splintered with the same happiness as they felt, was coming towards them. "You did it! You won! Rossano called it a day at Modena. You did it!"

Ham turned and put his hand on Taz's knee. "It's all yours from now on, Taz. You lucky stiff."

Then he was clambering out of the car, walking away from the car without a backward glance, with Bartell jogging beside him, asking him how the tyres had held, asking him didn't they have the best darn tyres and sports car in the world; walking down the steaming, shining road away from one life to another, walking and then running, stiff-legged and awkwardly, towards Sophie, coming to him with tears and laughter making a beautiful mess of her face. He clasped her in his arms, holding her to him, and then beyond her head he saw his mother.

Standing alone in the sunlight, staring past him at Taz still sitting in the car.



Jon Cleary



JON CLEARY was born in Sydney, Australia, in 1917. He left school at the age of fifteen, and embarked on a career that has never lacked for variety or adventure. He has been a laundry worker, travelling salesman, odd-job bush worker, baker's assistant, animated cartoonist and commercial artist. He has also fought bush fires, been lost in a blizzard and fallen over a three-hundred-foot precipice.

At the outbreak of war he joined the Australian Forces, serving in the Middle East and New Guinea, and at the same time started to write seriously. His war novel, *The Climate of Courage*, was a best-seller, as was *Justin Bayard*, which has been successfully filmed.

An avid motor-racing fan, he drives a bright blue fibre-glass Jensen, and claims it is his one extravagance. He is married to a fellow-Australian, and has two daughters. After roaming for eleven years, the Cleary family now plan to settle in Australia, and are building a house at Palm Beach, near Sydney.

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